

A CASE STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF A SIBLING-ATTENDED BIRTH

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by
Marilyn Humrichouse
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Marilyn Humrichouse

Approved by Committee:

<u>Sandra L. Sellers</u>	<u>11/14/95</u>
Major Thesis Advisor	Date
<u>May Jensen</u>	<u>11/14/95</u>
Committee Member	Date
<u>Dawn H. Heabertin</u>	<u>11-14-95</u>
Committee Member	Date

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ABSTRACT

Sibling-attended birth has been recognized as an option for families to promote attachment and positive family and sibling relationships. Although the short term effects have been studied, little is known about the long-term effects to the sibling and the extended family. This study explored how sibling participation in the birth process affects attachment, sibling relationships and family relationships.

The following questions were developed for the study: (1) What thoughts, feelings and perceptions does a family who has had a sibling present at birth have regarding the birthing experience? (2) How do family members perceive the sibling-attended birth as different than a birth siblings do not attend? (3) How do family members perceive the sibling-attended birth experience has affected attachment, sibling relationships, and family relationships? and (4) What nursing interventions and support measures would family members recommend to health care professionals to enhance the birth experience for the entire family? A qualitative case study design was employed to explore the thoughts, feelings and perceptions of a family who had experienced a sibling-attended birth. This case study was an in-depth investigation of a family nearly two years after the birth of the youngest sibling.

The family for this study consisted of a mother and father, their three living children, and the maternal and paternal grandparents of the children. The oldest child was present at the birth of the youngest child nearly two years prior to interview. The data collection instrument utilized assisted in obtaining descriptive data from audiotaped focused interviews with the subjects. Through taped interviews, the researcher and subjects explored aspects of the sibling-attended birth experience that were important to the family. The data were then analyzed to discover themes or patterns to understand the effects of a sibling-attended birth process.

The conceptual framework of attachment was used to understand the effects of sibling-attended birth. Conceptual themes that were identified were inclusion,

exclusion, preparation and values. The themes emphasized thoughts and feelings about family unity, shared experiences, fear, concern, maturity, gentleness, kindness and modesty. Major implications for advanced nursing practice include providing relevant education to childbearing families about sibling-attended births, preparing grandparents and siblings as well as parents, helping the sibling feel welcome at the birth and encouraging interaction among family members to enhance sibling attachment and positive family relationships. In addition, understanding the concept of attachment can be viewed as significant in expanding nursing's body of knowledge.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Overview Of Problem

In the last twenty years, an increasing number of hospitals have permitted children to be present at the birth of their siblings. Although several authors (Daniels, 1983; Kuhn & Kopcinski, 1984; Murphy, 1993) have attributed this change to a theoretical focus on family-centered obstetrical care, others (Isberg & Greenberg, 1987) credited the "natural childbirth" movement in which birth is viewed as a natural event rather than a medical illness. In spite of subtle differences, both theoretical views have lead to an increase in sibling-attended births.

Positive aspects of siblings' presence at birth are claimed by a number of authors. Mehl, Brendsel, and Peterson (1977) found less sibling rivalry among children present at the birth of a sibling. Anderson (1981) believed that children observing their mothers giving birth would perceive it as a "natural process rather than a vague, frightening illness or disease" (p. 30). Siblings' participation at birth contributed

to family unity according to a study conducted by Krutsky (1985); likewise, Murphy (1993) and Kuhn and Kopcinski (1984) indicated that inviting the child to be involved in the birth was one strategy to encourage positive sibling relationships. Perez (1979) declared that nurses working with families who had sibling-attended births found the experience gratifying to all participants including the nurse.

Although research supports the practice of giving birth with siblings in attendance, the notion of sibling-attended birth also has evoked negative responses from the general public and healthcare providers alike. Anderson and Simkin (1981) referred to the presence of children at birth as the "breaking of a sacred taboo" (p. 5). Some people question the morality of children witnessing their mother giving birth (Hartley, 1993); many believe birth is an adult event. Lumley (1983) found no significant short term ill effects on siblings present at birth but did find a slight increase in hostility in those present at birth compared to other siblings not present at birth. Isberg and Greenberg (1987) conducted psychiatric

consultations with 22 families in which the children reported more anxiety following their presence at siblings' birth than was acknowledged by their parents.

It becomes apparent that inconsistencies exist in the literature as to the effects of siblings' presence at birth. Currently clinicians in the field report that fewer nurses are inviting parents to include their children in this event. As advocates for childbearing families, nurses need to inform parents of their options and recognize the diversity of opinions about this controversial issue. Understanding the experiences of a sibling-attended birth from the family's perspective can assist nurses in preparing families for birth. Furthermore, nurses are in an opportune position to facilitate early attachment by encouraging siblings as well as parents to interact with the newborn. Consideration of the qualitative aspects of a sibling's presence at birth can lead to increased knowledge as well as changes in attitudes of nurses providing care to childbearing families.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore how sibling participation in the birth process affects attachment, sibling relationships and family relationships. Specifically the purpose of this study was to examine the responses of one family to the presence of a seven-year-old sibling at the birth of his youngest brother. as follows:

Research Questions

1. What thoughts, feelings and perceptions does a family who has had a sibling present at birth have regarding the birthing experience?
2. How do family members perceive the sibling-attended birth as different than a birth siblings do not attend?
3. How do family members perceive the sibling-attended birth experience has affected the following:
 - a. attachment
 - b. sibling relationships
 - c. family relationships
4. What nursing interventions and support measures

would family members recommend to health care professionals to enhance the birth experience for the entire family?

Definition of Terms

Key terms used in this study were family, birth experience, sibling, sibling-attended birth, sibling relationships, family relationships and attachment. Each term was defined as follows:

Family - a specific group of nine people including three generations, consisting of a mother and father, their three living children, and the maternal and paternal grandparents of the children.

Birth experience - the event of childbearing, including labor as well as delivery of the infant.

Sibling - one of two or more children having both parents in common.

Sibling-attended birth - a birth in which a child of the parents is present.

Sibling relationships - the interactions between children in a family.

Family relationships - the interactions between

individual family members.

Attachment - the emotional bond that connects two individuals in a relationship that endures over time.

Overview of Conceptual Basis of the Study

The conceptual basis for the study was attachment. The concept of attachment has been historically described in terms of infant behavior. As an infant interacts with others in the environment attachment behaviors develop.

Klaus and Kennell (1982b) referred to human attachment as "a unique relationship between two people that is specific and endures through time" (p. 2). Bowlby (1977) similarly defined attachment as "the propensity of human beings to make strong affectional bonds to particular others" (p. 201).

Theoretically it has been postulated that attachment is essential for infant survival and development (Bowlby, 1977; Hughes & Noppe, 1985; Klaus & Kennell, 1982b). Attachment theorists propose that children learn about relationships from interactions with their primary caregivers, which subsequently helps

to develop and maintain other relationships (Brody, Stoneman, & McCoy, 1994). Sibling relationships are usually the longest and most enduring relationships in life, outlasting marriages, and surviving the death of parents. Often considered to play a minor role in human development, sibling relationships affect how people feel about themselves and how they interact with others as much as parental influences (Goode, 1994).

Initial Review of the Literature

There has been a paucity of research on sibling-attended birth in the last ten years. Nichols and Humenick (1988) suggested that the effects of the new baby on the sibling and the effects of sibling on the infant should be researched. Murphy (1993) indicated that previous studies have examined sibling behavior before and after birth and proposed that looking at the "larger family process" (p. 283) could yield significant understanding for nurses.

How children feel about their siblings seems to influence the way in which their relationships with siblings develop from the earliest encounters (Dunn, 1985). When siblings participate in the birth

experience, the baby is viewed as a special gift rather than the cause of mother's absence while she is in the hospital giving birth (Anderson & Simkin, 1981).

Although several studies described siblings' attendance at birth as an experience that can enhance sibling relationships (Anderson, 1981; Daniels, 1983; Kuhn & Kopcinski, 1984; Mehl et al., 1977), other studies (Isberg & Greenberg, 1987; Leonard, C.H., Irvin, N., Ballard, R.A., Ferris, C. & Clyman, R., 1979; Lumley, J., 1983) indicated that the experience was less than positive.

Significance to Nursing

Information from this study offers nursing new insights into understanding sibling-attended birth experiences. With this knowledge, nurses can alleviate misconceptions related to the practice and provide accurate information about sibling-attended birth to families.

Nurses can be instrumental in promoting attachment of siblings. At the infant's birth the nurse can assume a vital role in assisting the sibling to interact with the newborn by pointing out the normal

characteristics especially the grasp reflex. Nurses need information about methods in which sibling attachment and positive sibling and family relationships can be developed.

With further research and understanding of a family's expectations and concerns regarding a sibling-attended birth, nurses can provide sensitive care at this very important time in the life of a family. The family needs to know that nurses are concerned about relationships among family members as well as the physical needs of the mother and infant. In addition, attachment theory and knowledge can be viewed as significant in expanding nursing's body of knowledge.

Summary

Sibling-attended birth is a practice surrounded by controversy. Limited knowledge is available to nurses about what the family experiences at this time. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to explore how sibling participation in the birth process affects attachment, sibling relationships and family relationships. It was believed that information from

this study could provide nursing with more knowledge of the experience of sibling-attended birth from the family's perspective. With this knowledge, nurses would be better able to prepare and assist families who wish to have a sibling present a birth.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to explore how sibling participation in the birth process affects attachment, sibling relationships and family relationships. This chapter contains three sections. The conceptual foundation for the study is described in the first section. Section two presents a review of research relevant to the study. A summary concludes the chapter.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual basis for this study was attachment. Attachment has been defined as "a bond of affection or loyalty" (Webster's II New Riverside University Dictionary, 1988, p. 136). Historically, John Bowlby, a research scientist was one of the first persons to examine the concept of attachment. Bowlby (1977) defined the term as "the propensity of human beings to make strong affectional bonds to particular others" (p. 201) and proposed that the infant's attachment to a caretaker, usually the mother, would determine his or her future well being.

Attachment may be viewed as a developmental process across the life span. Involving more than the mother-infant relationship, it occurs in a larger context that also includes fathers, siblings and extended family members. The quality of attachment developed in infancy is believed to provide a foundation for subsequent intimate relationships (Greenberg, Cicchetti, & Cummings, 1990).

The term bonding has been used to describe attachment by Klaus and Kennell (1982b), in spite of some confusion with regard to the two concepts. In the preface to their second edition of Parent-Infant Bonding (p. xiii) they stated: "We were distressed when the word bonding became too popular too rapidly and was confused with a simple, speedy, adhesive property rather than the beginning of a complex human psychobiological process."

Although acknowledging some difficulty operationally defining the concept of attachment, Klaus and Kennell (1982a) described certain parental behaviors and suggested that there is a critical attachment period for parents shortly after birth.

Mothers demonstrated more affection toward their children when provided opportunities to touch and make eye contact with them immediately after birth. Fathers demonstrated specific behaviors during the attachment process with their newborn infants. These responses, referred to as engrossment, include a visual and tactile awareness and strong feeling of attraction to the infant. Engrossment is said to be intensified by early contacts with the alert infant (Greenberg & Morris, 1974).

Although a wide variety of literature related to infant and parental attachment exists, few researchers have investigated the notion of sibling attachment. In an exploratory study of 30 children, Anderberg (1988) observed the acquaintance and attachment process of siblings to the newborn. The researcher found the most common acquaintance response of siblings was that of looking at the newborn. Kissing and stroking the newborn were found to be behaviors that demonstrated attachment. Children who had experienced a loss of an important person or pet demonstrated fewer attachment behaviors. Anderberg concluded that health care

providers and parents can facilitate sibling attachment by promoting prenatal and newborn acquaintance and allowing for spontaneous interactions between sibling and infant.

High access between siblings promotes strong sibling attachment according to clinical psychologists Bank and Kahn (1982). They further proposed that the earlier access begins and the longer siblings have access to each other the closer will be their relationship. In their research of 250 sibling relationships, Bank and Kahn concluded the following:

The prevailing theories of human development seemed strangely silent about siblings and provided few conceptual principles or useful information to help us understand the emotionally charged, real-live dramas that were being enacted each day in our consulting rooms. Before we can embark on the development of a new theory about siblings, we spent more than a year trying to fit the disparate findings from existing areas of research on siblings--psychoanalysis, twin research, family systems, birth order, and

sociology--to the actuality of our patients' lives (p. 5).

In addition to high sibling access, Bank and Kahn discovered that the need for personal identity and a lack of parental influence also contributed to stronger bonds between siblings.

Early sibling attachment was investigated by Marecki, Wooldridge, Dow, Thompson and Lechner-Hyman (1985) in a study of 30 preschool children at the first visit with their newborn sibling. Ten children attended sibling preparation classes and the remaining 20 did not. All were videotaped on the day of mother and infant's discharge from the hospital and tapes were assessed for the presence or absence of behaviors indicating attachment. The methods used to make contact with the infant were noted as well as the child's proximity to the newborn. No significant differences were found between the two groups; however, behaviors indicative of attachment such as standing near, looking at and touching the head and face, hugging, and kissing the infant were demonstrated by the majority of children in both groups.

Gullicks and Crase (1993) designed a study to investigate parents' expectations and perceptions of the behavior of their firstborn child before and after the birth of a sibling. Seventy married couples who had one child age six or under and were expecting their second child completed questionnaires late in the pregnancy and again four weeks after the birth. Findings revealed that parents actually expected more negative behaviors than they observed and that siblings were more interested in the newborn and wanted to be involved more than parents expected. The researchers charged nurses with the responsibility of conveying this information to parents and suggested that perhaps enhanced sibling relationships and positive sibling behaviors may be the result.

Although the concepts of attachment and bonding may be viewed as separate phenomena representing one-way emotional ties, either from the infant to a significant person or from the significant individual to the infant, in this paper attachment denotes reciprocal emotional bonds. Specific behaviors that characterize sibling attachment include looking at, making eye

contact with, talking to, smiling at, touching, kissing, hugging and wanting to be near the infant. The infant responds over time with many of these same behaviors toward the sibling. Attachment is much more complex than physical behaviors. It also includes verbal expressions of affection and caring and concern for another person.

Review of Relevant Research

Sibling-attended births have been studied from various perspectives with regard to family relationships. In a descriptive study, Anderson (1981) compared a group of 43 siblings from 25 families who had been present when their mothers gave birth at home with another group of 39 siblings from 25 families whose mothers had given birth in the hospital without siblings in attendance. The primary purpose of the study was to examine the perceptions of the parents regarding siblings' responses to pregnancy, birth and the newborn. The families were chosen because of anticipated similarities and were contacted through a school of midwifery or childbirth education classes.

Data were gathered by means of an interview with

the mother that sometimes also included the father and siblings. In addition to demographic data, respondents were asked questions about activities used to prepare siblings for a new baby in the family. Other questions pertained to the siblings' reactions to the labor and birth and the infant weeks and months following birth. A final question asked parents what they wished would have happened differently regarding their child or children participating in the pregnancy and birth.

In the group who had siblings present at birth, 20 of the 25 families included siblings in office visits for prenatal care. Only 12 of the families without siblings present permitted their children to accompany the mother.

Childbirth preparation classes were attended by all 25 of the couples who permitted siblings to be present at birth and 17 couples were accompanied by their children. Twenty-two of the couples without siblings at birth attended childbirth preparation classes but only five families included their children in the classes.

The perceived reactions of children present at

labor and birth were described as curious, calm, supportive, and excited and were considered to be positive in 22 of 25 families. In 17 of these families, children reached out to touch the new baby and six had a present for the infant.

Twenty-six of the 39 children who did not attend the birth were taken to the hospital after the birth and visited their mother in the lobby. They saw their newborn siblings by looking through the nursery window.

Forty-two of the 43 siblings present at birth wanted to participate in care of the infant in the weeks and months following the birth. Regressive behaviors were reported in eight (19%) of the children in this group and seven (16%) were observed to be abusive to the infant at one time. All children in this group were perceived to be very close to the infant in the early weeks. When the baby became mobile, however, some sibling fighting was noted.

Thirty-eight of the 39 children not present at birth participated in the care of their new sibling. Thirteen (33%) demonstrated some regressive behaviors and 13 (33%) were abusive to the infant. Twenty-four

siblings were said to have loving relationships with the newborn, ten were indifferent and five were jealous.

When asked what they wished would have happened differently regarding their child or children participating in the birth, several families indicated they would have taken more pictures or assigned someone to do so. Of the families without siblings present, four mothers would have liked to have had their children present.

From this study, the researcher concluded that many children have the need, desire and ability to participate in the birth of siblings; that parents often want to include their children in prenatal and birth experiences; and that nurses, by providing sensitive care to the entire family, can receive a sense of satisfaction. Furthermore children's positive associations of birth and the new baby can be developed with a sibling-attended birth.

In a descriptive study intended to aid in the development of services to childbearing families at Booth Maternity Center, Philadelphia, Daniels (1983)

used play techniques and tape recorders to interview 35 children from 2 1/2 to 15 years of age, who had been present at a sibling's birth. Mothers, most fathers, nurse-midwives and the support person for the child also were interviewed about the sibling-attended birth experience.

The researcher rated the experiences as positive or negative by comparing 14 factors of a supposed ideal situation to the actual birth as reported by the five people in attendance. Mothers' reports were nearly always positive. Fathers were positive but had some concerns about the child if there were complications. Support persons' accounts varied depending on their relationship to the mother. The descriptions of the nurse-midwives were favored by the researcher because of their objectivity and the children's accounts were valued for their spontaneity. The children's number of positive ratings averaged nine. Twenty-eight of the 35 children related the birth experience in positive terms. Twenty children used positive descriptions of feelings as well, such as:

"I was real glad I was there," "The baby just

popped out; you could really see her," "It was real exciting," "When she's big, I can tell her I was there," "It wasn't gory, like on TV. It was ah...decent" (1983, p. 20).

Fear was also expressed in some way by 25 children and considered by the researcher to be a negative emotion. The knowledge rating was 28 positives indicating children learned accurate information about childbirth. Sibling bonding behaviors, including eye contact and touching, were identified in 23 of the 35 births.

Daniels concluded that sibling-attended births provide opportunities for children to learn and experience the intense and complex feelings of closeness, joy and fear surrounding the process of childbearing. Although parents may request a sibling's presence, nurses are responsible to assist in the preparation for a sibling-attended birth. Three guidelines developed as a result of the study include a preparation sequence to help parents prepare the child, a support person to be there just for the child, and a minimum age requirement of five years.

DelGiudice (1986) researched the relationship

between sibling jealousy and a child's presence at birth, comparing 12 children present at birth with 16 children not present. Using a three-part questionnaire to gather data from the 22 participating families, demographic information was obtained, the frequency of negative behaviors representative of jealousy were rated and two open-ended questions identifying the child's reaction to the new sibling were answered. Significant differences in jealousy between the two groups were not demonstrated; however those attending a sibling's birth were described as protective and caretaking. According to this study further research is needed examining both positive and negative behaviors following a sibling-attended birth.

In a study conducted by Isberg and Greenberg (1987), 22 families who requested a sibling-attended birth were interviewed by a child psychiatrist before and after delivery. The researchers found through play interviews that more anxiety was demonstrated by the six children who actually attended the births than had previously been reported in the literature. Parents, however, did not recognize this anxiety. The authors

recommended additional studies of sibling-attended births to validate or dispute their clinical findings.

Children's behavior at the birth of a sibling was studied by Leonard et al. (1979) to determine the advisability of this practice. All of the 40 children from 32 families were prepared for the experience by attending classes and play sessions and were required to have a support person with them at the time of labor and birth. Nurses rated the children using an adjective checklist and noted the degree of involvement during the early and late stages of labor, birth of infant, delivery of placenta, repair of episiotomy and postpartal period.

At the time of early labor 25 of the 36 awake children interacted with their mother by timing contractions, asking questions and "were solicitous of how the mother was feeling" (Leonard et al., 1979, p. 950). Later in labor, 25 children observed while 11 were outside the room intermittently. Twenty-nine children watched the entire delivery, two watched intermittently, two appeared to want to withdraw and five were out of the room.

The newborn became the center of attention and only five children observed the delivery of the placenta while 33 were near the head of the mother's bed. Twelve continued to stay near mother and infant rather than observe repair of the perineum that 23 mothers required. Five children asked questions about the repair, five others watched part of the process without distress, and one cried and expressed worry about her mother.

Postpartally children were observed to resume normal activities quickly, going out to eat with the father or going to sleep if it was night. The conclusion made by the reseachers that "childbirth is primarily an adult event" (Leonard et al., 1979, p.951) was not well supported by the study.

An observational study in Australia conducted by Lumley (1983) compared 22 preschool age children (ages one to four) who had attended the birth of a sibling with children from a control group, matched for age and sex, who had not attended their sibling's birth. Two months after the birth, a questionnaire was mailed to parents asking them to rate the frequency of 14

behaviors reflecting affection, hostility, regression or competition. Results revealed that there were no differences between the two groups when comparing individual behaviors except 13 from the group present at birth wanted to drink from breast or bottle (5 frequently, 3 sometimes and 5 occasionally) and 10 from the control group indicated a desire to do so (0 frequently, 1 sometimes and 9 occasionally). When the behaviors were grouped together using the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed ranks test, however, hostile behaviors were found to be more common among the group present at birth. The author recommended that these findings be generalized only with caution and suggested further research be conducted in this area.

In 1977 Mehl et al., as part of a larger study, interviewed 15 families whose 20 children, ages 2 to 14 years, had been present at a sibling's birth and compared them to 20 children of similar ages not present at birth. All children were asked where babies come from and observed at play. Observations also were made of the children at the time of the sibling-attended birth. The researchers found that

children present at birth had more accurate concepts of birth than the children not present. From their observations they developed the following guidelines:

1. Adequate prenatal preparation, involving explanations on the child's level, slides, movies, and books with adults explaining what is occurring.
2. An open-door policy in which the child could come and go at will.
3. The presence of a responsible adult well known to the child who can provide explanations along with physical and emotional support.
4. Anticipation of the child's concerns, including the 6-to-10-year-old's concerns about blood.
5. Acknowledgement of the child by the mother after delivery and reassurance that she is all right.

6. Provision of age appropriate opportunities for the child to interact soon after birth with the newborn (p. 278).

The researchers reported less sibling rivalry and postulated that girls who witnessed the birth of a sibling might have a better self concept as women and feel capable of giving birth as their mothers did. In addition, boys might learn from their fathers a nurturing, supportive role. They suggested that obstetrical practices be changed to allow children to participate in sibling-attended births when their parents request it.

The impact of a sibling-attended birth on parents was investigated by Krutsky (1985). From a convenience sample the researcher used open-ended questions to interview sixteen couples who had been a part of a sibling-attended birth. Three themes were identified from the review of data, including: (1) Family unity was enhanced by sibling-attended birth; (2) Parents viewed the sibling-attended birth as a small part of a larger positive experience; and (3) At the birth of their next baby, parents would again include the

siblings.

Future research is needed to document the variety of factors that influence a family participating in a sibling-attended birth. Comprehensive nursing care for childbearing families must be based on an understanding of many aspects of the experience of a sibling-attended birth. Research is lacking about grandparents' involvement in sibling-attended birth. Health care professionals must be attentive to the diverse needs of all the members of a childbearing family.

Summary

Attachment, the development of bonds of loyalty and affection between family members, has been determined to be an important aspect of relationships. The conceptual framework of attachment can be used to understand the needs of the family, including siblings at the time of birth. Although the review of the literature revealed sibling-attended birth to be a method of facilitating attachment and promoting family unity, there has been little research on its effects on family relationships, especially sibling relationships in the last ten years.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to explore how sibling participation in the birth process affects attachment, sibling relationships and family relationships. Specifically the purpose of this study was to examine the responses of one family to the presence of a seven-year-old sibling at the birth of his youngest brother. This chapter focuses on the methodology of the study and includes the following sections: the research design, the case study subject selection process, the data collection instrument, data collection procedures, and protection of human subjects.

Research Design

Because little knowledge about sibling attachment following attendance at birth was found in the research literature, a qualitative case study design was employed. A case study is a description and analysis of a particular contemporary experience (major life event) involving an individual or group. This research design permitted the researcher to perform an in-depth

analysis of phenomena in order to gain understanding and provide new insights about the effects of a family experiencing a sibling-attended birth. Individual and family responses may contain important information that will help to generate questions for further study and provide data to add to nursing's knowledge of attachment.

Subject Selection

The case study family was chosen because of its uniqueness as a family and the subjects' willingness to share their feelings and perceptions with the researcher. The case study sample consisted of a mother and father, three living siblings, and maternal and paternal grandparents, for a total of nine persons. The last child was born into the family two years ago (4-15-93) with the oldest living child present at his birth. This family was specifically selected because grandparents, parents and children were willing to participate, allowing a comprehensive view of how sibling-attended birth affects many family relationships.

Data Collection Instrument

The data collection instrument (Appendix A) utilized in this study contained questions identified in the literature and developed by the researcher. These general questions assisted in obtaining descriptive information of the subjects' thoughts, perceptions, and feelings prior to, during, and after the birth of their new family member. The instrument was divided into three parts, consisting of questions directed to the parents, grandparents, and child.

Questions to the parents were:

1. What lead you to the decision to include your son in the birth of a new baby?
2. What did you do to prepare him for this occasion?
3. In what way did the child's presence affect the birth experience for you?
4. What was the response of the nursing staff attending the birth?
5. What might you do differently should you give birth to another child in the future?
6. What were your observations regarding the initial meeting of siblings?

7. How do you perceive your son's being present at his sibling's birth affected the attachment and relationship between them?
8. What effect do you think this experience has had on family relationships?
9. What could the nursing staff have done that would have enhanced the family's experience at this birth?

Questions to the grandparents included:

1. How did you feel when you learned that your grandson was to be present at the birth of his sibling?
2. What were your impressions of siblings at birth in general?
3. How do you perceive your grandson's being present at his sibling's birth affected the relationship between them?
4. How were you involved in this process?
5. What effect do you think this experience has had on family relationships?
6. What would you suggest to nurses that might facilitate family involvement in the birth event?

Questions to the sibling were:

1. When did you learn that you were going to be a big brother again?
2. Tell me about your experience with the birth of your baby brother.
3. How did you find out that you would be present when the new baby was born?
4. What part of the birth stands out in your memory?
5. What would you suggest that might help other children to be involved in the birth of their new baby brother or sister?
6. What might nurses do to help children who come to the hospital to participate in the birth of their sibling?
7. How would you describe your relationship with your youngest brother now?
8. What did the nurses do to help you be a part of this birth?

Questions directed to the whole family together included the original four research questions.

1. What thoughts, feelings and perceptions do you have regarding the birthing experience?

2. How do you perceive the sibling-attended birth as different than a birth siblings do not attend.
3. How do you perceive the sibling attended birth experience has affected the following:
 - a. attachment
 - b. sibling relationships
 - c. family relationships
4. What nursing interventions and support measures would family members recommend to health care professionals to enhance the birth experience for the entire family?

Data Collection Procedures

After an informed consent form was signed by the participants, data were collected through face to face audiotaped interviews conducted in a setting chosen by the participants. Maternal grandparents were interviewed together, in their home, for thirty minutes. Paternal grandparents were also interviewed together for thirty minutes, in their home. The mother and father were interviewed together at their home for one hour. The sibling present at birth was interviewed individually for thirty minutes on two separate

occasions. Each time interviews took place in his home. Two shorter interviews were planned for the sibling due to the physical characteristics of his age that might have made it difficult to focus for extended periods of time. A one-hour meeting including all nine family members was held to observe the younger siblings, ask the research questions and clarify or ask additional questions. The fireside room of a local church was the setting for this final meeting.

During the interviews the researcher and subjects explored aspects of the experience of a sibling present at birth. The interviewer's questions addressed the subjects' thoughts, perceptions, and feelings prior to, during, and after the birth of their new family member. The questions served as a guide to direct the interview and facilitate discussion about the subjects' perceptions of the event and how they now view the attachment process and relationships between siblings and among family members.

Using a focused-interview format, the researcher attempted to discover patterns or themes and to understand the situation of a sibling-attended birth as

experienced by the subjects. All interview sessions were taped to allow for objective analysis and for the researcher to review for intellectual and emotional biases relevant to the subject studied.

Protection of Human Subjects

Written permission to conduct the study first was obtained from the Drake University Human Subjects Research Review Committee (Appendix B). The researcher then obtained a signed informed consent from each participant. The consent form described the interview process, informed the participants of their right to terminate the interview at any point, and communicated the method for obtaining the results of the study (Appendix B).

The subjects in this study had the right to privacy, informed consent and the right to freedom from harm. A cover letter was presented to the subjects describing the purpose of the study, the risks and benefits involved and the procedure to initiate the study. The cover letter also informed the subjects that participation was voluntary; they could stop the interviews at any time; and that actual names would not

be used to ensure confidentiality (Appendix B).

Summary

In order to explore how sibling participation in the birth of a sibling affects attachment, sibling relationships and family relationships, a case study design was employed. Face to face taped interviews were conducted with participants and data were collected that related to the thoughts, feelings, and perceptions of family members regarding the experience. Chapter Four presents specific data that describe the family and provides a summarization of each interview session.

CHAPTER FOUR

CASE STUDY DATA

The purpose of this study was to explore how sibling participation in the birth process affects attachment, sibling relationships and family relationships. Specifically the purpose of this study was to examine the responses of one family to the presence of a seven-year-old sibling at the birth of his youngest brother. The case study family consisted of a mother and father, three living siblings, and maternal and paternal grandparents, for a total of nine persons. Audiotaped interviews were held with all participants. This chapter presents data that describe the family and provides a summary of each taped interview session.

Case Study Subjects

The mother and father in the study have been married nearly 16 years and live on a farm near a small rural community in Iowa. The father, 36 years old at the time of interview, attended Iowa State University after high school and studied agriculture. Currently he operates a hog farming operation. He has a private

pilot's license and is an avid tennis and basketball player. The mother, 37 years old at the time of interview, has a bachelor's degree from Iowa State University in education with additional studies in accelerated learning of gifted children. She is a homemaker, teaches their older son at home, and assists other families in the area with home school education as well. Both individuals have been youth group leaders and serve on committees in their church. They are involved in community activities, playing in alumni band, directing, and performing in little theater productions. Four children have been born to this couple. The first son was born in 1983 followed by three more sons in 1985, 1989, and 1993. The oldest child died in 1985 following a tragic accident; the second son was two weeks old at the time.

The second son, now the oldest living child of the family, was nine years and eight months of age at the time of interview. He is the oldest living grandchild on the maternal side but has three older cousins on the paternal side of the family. He was doing third grade work at time of interview in his home school education,

taking piano and clarinet lessons, and has learned sign language by attending a community college class. Also active in 4-H and community events, he has performed in children's theater and been in local parades with his llamas.

The third son, now the middle child was five years and five months of age at the time of family interview. Playing ball and helping his father on the farm are some of his favorite activities. He will start home school in the fall and has participated in many of the home school program activities already.

The youngest son was one year and 11 months of age at the time of family interview. He is a friendly, outgoing child who loves books and music and also shows interest in athletic activities.

The paternal grandparents live on the same farm as their three grandsons, but across the road. They have another married son and two married daughters and seven other grandchildren. The grandmother has a bachelor of arts degree in education and is currently a homemaker. The grandfather has a high school education and has farmed in this area for many years. They both

participate in church activities and spend a lot of time with their grandchildren.

The maternal grandparents have lived on a nearby farm all their married life. They have two other married daughters and four other grandchildren. Their youngest daughter recently died in a snowplow accident; she was not married. The grandmother has a bachelor's degree in home economics education and has been a homemaker for many years. The grandfather has a degree in animal science and has operated a hog farm most of his adult life. Church and community functions benefit from their involvement. Both have received many honors and awards for their contributions to society, including Master Farm Homemaker and Master Farmer. The grandfather was also honored in 1993 with a National Religious Heritage of America - Youth Division Award.

Summary of Interview Data

Parents Interview

The interview with the parents took place in their home on 2-21-95 between 4:00 and 5:00 p.m. The parents selected this time because of convenience to them and their family schedule. One year and ten months ago

their youngest son was born with his oldest living sibling present at the birth. The detailed verbatim interview data from all interviews summarized in this section can be found in the Appendix C-G. No names were used when transcribing interview data to protect the privacy of the family.

Before the interview with parents took place the purpose of the study and the subjects' rights were reviewed and the consent form (Appendix B) was signed. The parents were assured that they could decline to answer any question and that there were no right or wrong answers.

The interviewer and subjects have been acquainted for a number of years and were comfortable with their relationship. Professionally, the interviewer had been the labor and delivery nurse at the time of three of the couple's four children's births.

The interview with the couple (Appendix C) began with a question regarding the motivation to have a sibling-attended birth. The mother indicated it was her idea initially. "I thought it would be so much of the way we live our life... family oriented...." Then

when the older child asked to be there the couple discussed it further. The father was reluctant at first to share this special time and also was concerned about complications occurring and how this would affect the child. After receiving approval from their physician, the decision was made to include their older son.

Preparation of the sibling also was discussed. The parents indicated they used several books as well as farm animal births to help in his understanding. The advantage that home school education afforded in this process was mentioned. A tour of the hospital also helped prepare the child.

The interview then focused on the response of the nursing staff to the sibling-attended birth. The father remembered his surprise at having a "grumpy nurse." Other helpful nurses were recalled by the mother. When asked what nurses might do to enhance the experience the mother responded that anything positive and not negative would be appreciated. Some discussion about whether the middle sibling was mature enough to attend the birth followed and the parents concluded

that it was good that he could come to the hospital so soon afterward.

The couple spoke of the initial meeting of each of the siblings. Although it was exciting for the older sibling to come to the hospital to see the middle sibling soon after his birth, it was "different being there and seeing that little body come out" this time. The gentleness the older sibling displayed with the newborn was mentioned.

When asked how presence at birth has affected attachment and the relationship between their older and youngest sons, the father thought it was difficult to know. The mother saw "a real bond there" and felt the older son was "very nurturing" and willing to help in the care of the youngest child without complaint.

The effects of a sibling-attended birth on family relationships were reviewed by the parents. The mother mentioned the immediate families' "shared experience" as special. With regard to the extended family she stated: "I really appreciate the fact that none of them are critical of us doing this. That would have taken some of the joy out of it." The father remarked

that the family was no longer surprised at them doing "something different."

To enhance the sibling-attended birth experience hospital personnel could have provided a meal for the family so they could stay together, according to the father. The nurses' and physicians' attitudes were important to the mother. At the conclusion of the first interview the parents were invited to participate in the family interview one month later.

Paternal Grandparents Interview

The interview with the paternal grandparents took place in their home on 2-15-95, from 4:00 to 4:30 p.m. Before the interview with grandparents took place the purpose of the study and the subjects' rights were reviewed and the consent form (Appendix B) was signed. The grandparents were assured that they could decline to answer any question and that there were no right or wrong answers.

The interview with the paternal grandparents (Appendix D) began by addressing their feelings when they learned their grandson would attend the birth of his youngest sibling. Both expressed some concerns

particularly if things did not go well. The grandmother "thought it would be a real bonding time" and also mentioned her dismay that the middle sibling was left out.

When questioned about the relationship between the older and youngest sibling, the grandmother spoke of the real bond the older sibling had with the youngest; "this was his boy, his baby." This is when she noticed the middle sibling had been "left out." The grandfather commented on the "very close relationship" between older child and mother since the sibling-attended birth experience.

The grandparents recalled taking the middle child to the hospital soon after the birth. The grandmother noted he was on the bed with his mom a lot and she said, "I think he missed his mom." Grandfather brought up the fact that the older sibling videotaped the birth and both expressed some discomfort with that. The grandmother spoke of her son and how proud and gentle he was when they visited shortly after the birth.

The effects of the sibling-attended birth

experience on family relationships was discussed. The grandfather said that perhaps it had allowed his son to be "more willing to share with us certain things." Grandmother questioned whether the one incident made a difference but acknowledged a "freedom" within the family. She then commented about the attention she and the grandfather gave the middle child to help him feel special. She reported a recent change in relationship between the middle and youngest child, "how they are drawing together," and the older sibling is "being more the caretaker."

The grandparents were asked what nurses did or might do to facilitate family involvement. Their first responses indicated that they did not remember nurses being there. Later they did recall a nurse checking the vital signs of the mother and checking the infant. The grandmother suggested that the nurse would interact more with the family if there were serious problems with the infant and hoped the nurse would be sensitive to grandparents' needs and feelings at such a time. Otherwise both indicated there was little reason for the presence of a nurse.

Grandparent classes were discussed and the grandmother indicated that taking a class could help them feel more involved. She also said it would have been helpful to have been prepared ahead of time for the sibling's attendance. "It's really foreign to people in our generation to have that." To help the parents understand the grandparents' feelings for their grandchild was important to the grandmother also. She indicated nurses could make a difference in helping one generation understand the other regarding sibling-attended birth.

Maternal Grandparents Interview

The interview with the maternal grandparents took place in their home on 2-20-95, from 7:00 to 7:30 p.m. Before the interview with grandparents took place the purpose of the study and the subjects' rights were reviewed and the consent form (Appendix B) was signed. The grandparents were assured that they could decline to answer any question and that there were no right or wrong answers.

The interview with the maternal grandparents (Appendix E) began by addressing their feelings when

they learned their grandson would attend the birth of his youngest sibling. The grandmother stated that she had some "hesitations about it" related to modesty issues and his age but both felt he was mature beyond his years and that he had been well prepared by his parents. The grandfather remarked "it probably didn't phase me much" and commented about birth being a common experience on the farm.

When asked about relationships among family members the grandmother indicated that she did not know that the sibling-attended birth made any difference. The grandfather felt that perhaps home schooling may have led to a closeness between the older sibling and his mother. The unique close relationship in the family was discussed by the interviewer and subjects.

The grandparents visited the family in the hospital soon after the birth. The grandmother recalled little nursing involvement, however, the family had a "lot of freedom" while visiting. Grandfather said nurses might facilitate family involvement at this time by helping the sibling feel at ease.

The interview concluded with this statement by the

grandmother: "I think it's an experience he'll never forget." The couple were then invited to attend the meeting with the larger family on 3-23-95. ~~and reading~~

Sibling Interviews

The interview with the sibling took place in his home on 2-21-95, from 5:00 to 5:30 p.m., following the interview with his parents. The time was selected by the parents and child for their convenience. At the time of interview the subject was 9 years, 8 months old. It had been nearly two years since he had attended the birth of his youngest brother. Before the interview took place the purpose of the study and the subject's rights were reviewed and the consent form (Appendix B) was signed in the presence of his parents. The sibling was assured that he could decline to answer any question and that there were no right or wrong answers.

The first interview with the older sibling (Appendix F) began by exploring the subject's experience with a sibling-attended birth. The sibling could not remember when he was told about a new baby being expected in the family. He could, however,

recall where he was when he was told it was time to go to the hospital to have the baby and that he had been prepared for this event by watching videos and reading lots of books.

The part of the birth best remembered by the subject was: "Probably when you could see his little head." The next recollection by the child was picking out a name for the baby. He did not recall a nurse doing anything or saying anything to him at this time. He indicated nurses could assist children who attend birth by helping them "to feel at home."

The subject was asked about his relationship with his youngest sibling and responded that it was "pretty good." The interviewer found it difficult to formulate questions so that the subject would share more than brief one or two word answers. When reviewing the data collected, little was found that related to the feelings and perceptions of the child so the second interview was planned keeping this in mind.

The second interview with the older sibling was held one month after the first, on 3-21-95, from 3:30 to 4:00 p.m. at his home. He was again told that there

were no right or wrong answers and that he could decline to answer any question. In an attempt to help the subject describe his feelings, the interviewer took along "How are you feeling today?" which is a sheet of paper with about fifty drawings of facial expressions and one word descriptions printed under each face. This was introduced to the subject as a guide to help him think of words he might use to explain his feelings. When asked how he felt when he first heard his mother was expecting another baby the sibling used several of the words found on the page: "surprised and puzzled", "really weird inside", and "excited and happy." Seeing his mother in labor brought on a mix of feelings the sibling described as "excited and scary" and "surprised."

The interviewer inquired about the sibling's first feelings when he saw his new baby brother born. Again his responses included "real excited", "really surprised", "fun to get to see it" and "proud."

The remainder of the interview involved discussing what the sibling might do differently if he had the chance to see another sibling born. He indicated that

he would very much like to repeat the experience and would "rest up" and improve his videotaping skills next time. The interview concluded with an invitation to participate in the family interview on 3-23-95.

Family Interview

This interview took place on 3-23-95 from 8:00 to 9:00 p.m. and included the three children, the parents, and the maternal and paternal grandparents. The setting was the fireside room at a local church. Cookies, milk, hot and cold cider were offered to the participants. Comfortable chairs, a sofa and a child's size rocking chair were arranged in a circle to facilitate interaction among family members.

The parents sat on the sofa, grandparents were separate and evenly spaced around the circle. The older sibling (age 9 years and 8 months at time of interview) sat in a large chair throughout the interview. The middle sibling (3 years and 4 months) went directly to paternal grandmother and sat on her lap for a time then on the floor and moved around the room. The youngest sibling (1 year and 11 months) moved around the circle greeting and smiling at various

family members and interviewer. Throughout the session the two younger children played with each other or moved about, apparently happy in this group. No squabbles or disputes were evident during the hour the interview lasted. Toys were available for the children and were played with on several occasions.

The middle child was invited to sign the consent form (Appendix B) and readily wrote his name. The paternal grandmother, sitting nearby, commented with pride that he had written in cursive.

The youngest child noticed that both grandfathers were present and looked from one to the other saying "Bompah" "Bompah." Both older siblings heard this and asked him how many grandpas he had.

The family interview (Appendix G) began with a review of the purpose of the study, followed by the interviewer asking the family about their thoughts, feelings, and perceptions regarding a sibling-attended birth. The middle sibling was encouraged to participate and remembered wanting the baby to be a boy and getting to hold him at the hospital. The mother recalled the experience in positive terms and expressed

appreciation that the family was accepting of their decision to include the older sibling. The maternal grandmother indicated the experience may have influenced others in the community to consider a sibling-attended birth.

The differences between a sibling-attended birth and a birth without siblings in attendance were discussed. The maternal grandmother said the preparation would be different. "Seeing the process" was a remark made by the mother. More responsibility for the father was mentioned by both the father and maternal grandmother, especially if there were complications during a sibling-attended birth. Several addressed the way attendance at birth promotes a bond or indicates a bond among family members.

The effects of the sibling-attended birth on sibling attachment and relationships were considered. The attachment behaviors between the older and youngest sibling were described by the mother. The maternal grandmother said perhaps the age span between siblings affected the sibling relationship more than watching the birth. When questioned by his maternal

grandfather the older sibling indicated that he loved his brothers.

A comment by the mother regarding the effect of the sibling-attended birth on family relationships indicated her appreciation of the family's acceptance of the event. Although she did not object, the maternal grandmother indicated that she was a little startled by the idea but could "see that it was a very healthy situation." The paternal grandfather had rarely commented so a question was directed to him by the interviewer. He responded with doubt about any effects on his life and questioned whether the older sibling would remember the experience in five years or even now. The older sibling responded that he did remember the birth.

The interview then addressed the nursing interventions that might enhance a sibling-attended birth. The maternal grandmother spoke about the need for sibling preparation and suggested that a visit in advance with the obstetrical nurse could help the sibling. The concern of appropriate age was brought up by the maternal grandfather. Prolonged labor and the

need for a cesarean delivery were also concerns discussed by the group. The mother thought the nurse's attitude toward the child and situation made a difference.

The maternal grandmother admitted it would be difficult to see her daughter in pain during labor; however, the older sibling indicated he did not pay attention to his mother's pain, "because I was seeing him come out." "I just remember thinking of the baby." The maternal grandmother also spoke of the importance of considering the emotional make up of the child who might attend a sibling's birth.

Final comments by the paternal grandmother suggested that perhaps the sibling's participation meant more to the parents and was their attempt to strengthen the family bond. The maternal grandmother thought that observing his mother give birth could affect the compassion a man would have as a father. The maternal grandfather also indicated girl siblings might learn from the experience. The mother summed up the whole experience by stating; "I think for us, anytime you have a shared experience and can all say,

'remember when,' it makes a bond that's entirely different than just showing pictures...."

Summary

The events of a sibling-attended birth elicit many different thoughts, perceptions and feelings about the experience. This chapter presented specific data that described the subjects and provided a summarization of each interview session. Chapter Five will analyze and discuss the findings of the interview data and the significance of the findings for advanced nursing practice.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Analysis

The purpose of this study was to explore how sibling participation in the birth process affects attachment, sibling relationships and family relationships. This chapter will analyze the interview data for emergent themes or patterns, discuss the findings of the study and identify the significance of the study for advanced nursing practice.

Four research questions were developed for the study: (1) What thoughts, feelings and perceptions does a family who has had a sibling present at birth have regarding the birthing experience? (2) How do family members perceive the sibling-attended birth as different than a birth siblings do not attend? (3) How do family members perceive the sibling-attended birth experience has affected attachment, sibling relationships, and family relationships? and (4) What nursing interventions and support measures would family members recommend to health care professionals to enhance the birth experience for the entire family? To

answer these questions, the data were analyzed for emergent themes or patterns. First the taped interviews were transcribed into a word processor. Then data were coded as the next step in the process of content analysis. Codes were compared and similar codes were grouped into categories, compared and clustered. The themes or patterns related to the data were identified and described.

The first research question was: What thoughts, feelings and perceptions does a family who has had a sibling present at birth have regarding the birthing experience? In exploring this research question, the interview data were analyzed and organized according to the thoughts, feelings and perceptions that were repetitively addressed by the subjects. Four conceptual themes were identified and used to categorize these repetitive thoughts, feelings and perceptions. The themes are inclusion, exclusion, preparation and values. In the following paragraphs, each conceptual theme will be described and interview data to substantiate the themes will be included.

The first conceptual theme that categorized the

family's thoughts, feelings and perceptions was inclusion. The mother demonstrated her desire to include the oldest sibling very clearly. She believed family unity was encouraged by having its members take part in the significant events of the family. Other family members were not as enthusiastic initially but most perceived the value of including the sibling later. Examples of interview data to support the conceptual theme of inclusion are:

Well I'd been thinking about it, I don't know, probably by four or five months into the pregnancy I'd been thinking about it that it might be a really neat experience to have [older sibling] come with us.

I guess I just, I thought it would be so much of the way we live our life is, you know, family oriented and I wanted to at least explore the possibility of him coming.

Oh, he [obstetrician] said bring as many people as you want as long as there was room for him.

It was fine and he said he'd had a few experiences with siblings, not a lot, it didn't sound like, but he was fine with it and at that time you had mentioned that maybe you could be there for [older sibling] and so I felt really comfortable with....I felt comfortable with him anyway because I felt he was mature enough to handle it but, I thought that was going to be great if you were going to be able to be there.

Then we had another nurse on checkout. She was

really good with the boys. She made that comment, she goes, I really enjoy the older kids. The babies are great and stuff but she interacted with [middle sibling] and [older sibling] well, real well.

She just really went out of her way I thought letting them do a lot of the stuff, cause I knew she could've done it quicker and gotten us out of there but she took the time.

She had them right there during the bath showing them what she was doing.

Just included them, that was really good. We didn't have that one nurse very long I guess.

And [pediatrician] was fine with it too, he came in.....

I kind of remember them showing [older sibling] where he could sit and put his things, you know.

Involving everybody was good.

Well, anything that an adult does, positively, towards your child, I think you appreciate, no matter where you are. And so if they... maybe... just making them somehow feel like they're glad they are there. Or, let me know if there's something I can do for you. I don't know, just anything that isn't negative.

I think it was neat that [middle sibling] got to be there so early, you know, he was pretty excited about holding him.

The other day [older sibling] was telling [middle sibling] about remembering seeing him for the first time, and of course he would have just come to the hospital and that was still really exciting for him but I think it was different being there and seeing that little body come out and then

[older sibling] was the first one that got to hold him, wasn't he? The first picture we have is [older sibling] holding him.

Well, I think, whenever you have a group of people and you all have the same, you know, remember when we....instead of me saying, well I remember when you were born and this is what it was like. But for [older sibling] he can say, I remember when, and we've all had this shared experience.

Maybe if... having, you know, the hospital prepares a nice meal for the mother and father, maybe if siblings are going to be a part of it do a family dinner there in the room for everybody. I know [older sibling] and [middle sibling] and I had to go downstairs to the cafeteria and leave [mother] and [youngest sibling] up in the room, and it's hard to get their food and to have it brought to the room would have been nice. Anything like that where we could have stayed together.

It really was a real bonding thing with [older sibling], ... I mean that came to me real quick, because there was some real bonding there, [older sibling] had just, you know, this was his boy, his baby.

So we all got to go in and [middle sibling] got to hold the baby then, right away and of course they were in that big room. We all took pictures and had pictures taken with the baby.

...we all went over and hugged her... Of course [youngest sibling] was right there in the room with us too, it was a large room and there was a large chair and we all could sit in the chair and hold the baby and get our pictures taken.

I think it has let [father] share more with us. He's been more willing to share with us certain things.

Our families are so closely interrelated it's hard to tell if that one incident has made the difference, you know, cause I thought, you know, [father], we're really very close. [mother] is more of a private person and she's a...of course more comfortable with her family but, you know, there's no problem as far as we know there's just a freedom I think with the family. I don't know if that one incident has made a difference.

... [youngest sibling] asks for him now, he wants [middle sibling] now, he asks for him, so there is a bonding taking place with [middle sibling] and [youngest sibling]. I've been really thrilled to see that. And it's not leaving [older sibling] out, he has that role of being more the caretaker and feeling more included.

When we left [middle sibling] got to stay and they all came home together.

Then sometimes the grandparents end up doing a lot of the parenting. You would feel like you are part of that child, too. After taking a class you're involved. Anything like that that involves you makes you, makes that a, you know, more yours, you owned it.

... help them to understand the grandparents involvement in this, you don't realize, you don't have any realization as a parent what it means to grandparents to have a grandchild. And for them to understand it. I would think that might help relationships between those two generations if the parents understood how precious that grandchild is.

[middle sibling] is coming into his own more so, now. Maybe you have noticed at church when he sits with us. [middle sibling] will be sure to sit with us. He knows how we made special effort to make him realize how, we tell him how wonderful he is, what a winner he is.

Well he has talked so many times about what an awesome experience it was. I am sure that he greatly appreciates the fact that his folks had enough confidence in him and included him.

The fact that he has been home schooled I think has...just through that experience he's closer to his mom than most kids would be. And [father] gets a lot of...I think he's close to both of his parents. [middle sibling] has always been a Daddy's boy but I think that the home schooling thing has meant that they have hours and hours together each day and there's a lot of kids that don't have very many quality minutes with their parents. So I think that's a plus too.

We're just so lucky that they are so close by and basically spend one evening a week here anyway. Plus we go to college basketball games together another night a week so we spend a lot of time with all our grandchildren.

The thought just occurred to me, and it isn't connected with that question necessarily, that [mother] tended to be afraid of new experiences as she was growing up and I'm wondering if that has made her more determined that she's is going to help [older sibling] get involved in a lot of things and not be afraid of them. I don't know whether that's got anything to do with it or not. She won 4-H trips to Chicago and wouldn't go and different things she was scared to branch out.

They are a great team.

Oh, yes, we all went. Grandpa went down, we had a room full of people.

We had Dad with us.

Yes, we had four generations there, but I don't think he could remember anything from then. [paternal grandfather] and [paternal grandmother]

were there. They must of had [middle sibling] with them. After we all saw the baby, then they took [middle sibling] to get the baby a gift, [older sibling] and [middle sibling].

And I can remember, I don't know.... that was our first experience in a big birthing room where there was room for all three generations and both sides of the family. We had a lot of freedom.

We were able to take lots of pictures with everybody holding him.

...with [another grandchild] being born we all trucked down there.

Then there was my sister and her friend and everybody else too.

Births are a big event in our family!

There was some special bond that developed just during the labor, I think, with this particular nurse. Whether, it seems to me she had just had twins or was expecting twins, or something, I mean she was close enough to the situation that she knew exactly what [mother] was going through and I remember her saying that she was just wonderful.

Mmm. I guess...they ask me if I wanted to go and I said, sure.

Then we called the grandparents.

Umm, it just felt good inside cause you're gonna, you got to see the baby be born and.....

It was a good experience, only one out of ten kids get to do it and I got to do it so.....

I think beforehand that was one of our concerns was what if the situation didn't turn out very well. Now I think having done it once that even

if it didn't it would still be a bonding family situation.

It becomes just a real connectedness doesn't it? The whole....there's just a connecting, you know, bond all the way through the family this way. I think it's a beautiful thing, you know, to have happen.

...it's just opened this up and it's made it more a family thing. ...now even they are allowing the siblings.

It would usually be indicative of the bond that was already within families to consider including the child.

...the oldest is very nurturing to the youngest, he takes good care of him, he looks out for him. And if he isn't home the youngest wants to know where he is and calls his name over and over.

Like a heart bond?

Some of the close attachments don't develop until adulthood.

I mentioned earlier the acceptance that the family had, they accepted what we did.

It was wonderful to have the call and being able to go right down and be right there and be a part of it all, so, to have it open for us.....for me that was wonderful.

Involving the dads and child and they taking the time to explain things to the child.

His attitude makes a difference.

His attitude was - as long as there's room for me I don't care who else is there or how many.

The birthing rooms in the hospital are so nice and large. Some places you might have people in the way.

But for the parents to share this with the siblings maybe it's a stronger bond for them and to encourage them in their family bonding as much as it is for the sibling.

I think for us, anytime you have a shared experience and can all say, "remember when", it makes a bond that's entirely different than just showing pictures, you know, if you don't have the shared experience and memories.

The second conceptual theme identified from analysis of the data regarding the thoughts, feelings and perceptions of the family was exclusion. One consistent repetitive feeling that influenced the family was fear. The possibility that there would be problems or complications with the birth caused several family members to fear for the emotional well being of the older sibling. Concern about the maturity level lead to exclusion of the middle sibling. Examples of interview data to support this exclusion theme are:

It took me quite a while before I decided if it would be a good idea. I didn't know if I wanted to share it with him. I just thought, oh, when he gets older and he gets married then he'll maybe have the experience, you know. So that was the first thought when you asked and of course I was always scared, what if it didn't come out right?

We had a grumpy nurse.

I don't know if she....if it had anything to do with [older sibling], it might have, maybe she didn't like having him there but, I'm not sure.

I wonder if some of them had bad experiences about siblings or has there been a lot of sibling-attended births around?

I don't know if [middle sibling] would be mature enough or not.

Attention span being a little shorter than [older sibling's].

I think if [middle sibling] were to be there, there would have to be somebody that would be there, an adult there for him. I wonder though if he would feel left out at this point in our lives if he didn't get to go.

But I think him being two years older, he's more at a point of - [older sibling] got to do it and I didn't. I think he would feel more left out. I don't think he felt at all left out at that age, three. I think... I know he was too young. [Older sibling] was seven.

I tried to think if we got to do it again is there some way we could do it with just our family first. They got to see him within an hour or so and I don't know. Maybe you got to talk about this with them... my cousin had my aunt come to the birth and I thought...I wonder if my mom feels left out. You know [older sibling] got to go but she didn't get to....

I think that's when I noticed that [middle sibling] had been, more so, that [middle sibling] had been left out...

...I had misgivings about it too ... I thought

about [middle sibling], ahhh, they left [middle sibling] out, and even though he was young I felt like that was too bad.

Since he was the middle one too, you know, and it's taken him longer to bond than, I think he kinda felt they were all there and he was here with us.

...I think that's when I noticed that [middle sibling] had been, more so, that [middle sibling] had been left out, I mean that came to me real quick, because there was some real bonding there, [older sibling] had just, you know, this was his boy, his baby.

You know, to me, and then like you say [middle sibling] has been left out.

[middle sibling] was a little more, he wasn't happy, there's many times he'd said to me..I wish I was the baby, you know, he was feeling left out, he was not happy with where he was at and that's why we would do that.

But as far as just the family being there, there wasn't any involvement with the nurses and I don't know what they would have done in there cause it was just such a family affair.

There really wasn't any reason for the nurses to be in there, they would have been an extra almost.

Well, I had some hesitations about it. I knew he was quite a mature seven year old but still seven seemed pretty young and I guess I kind of looked back on my own deliveries and thought, boy, I wouldn't want anybody in the room other than the doctor and my husband...

I'm not sure that at seven years old [middle sibling] would be ready for something like that.

It wasn't that many years ago they didn't even let the fathers in and how you were just like in a separate world and this was just you and that baby's little thing. They weren't even a part of this ... It is really sad what the father missed out on...

There are lots of families that wouldn't even tackle this.

Well, and if it was a cesarean it would be out of the picture.

In regard to grandmothers being there - I've seen this daughter in too much pain emotionally anyway. I don't know if I'd want to be there to go through any more pain with her. My memories are not always good but I still have some vivid memories.

The third theme to emerge from the analysis of data regarding the thoughts, feelings and perceptions of the family was preparation. This theme focused on the family's perceptions that the older sibling needed to be well prepared to participate in the birth. Grandparents also indicated that it would have helped them to have been better prepared for the sibling-attended birth experience. Examples of thoughts and feelings that support the theme of preparation are:

I had quite a few books on the before, you know, pregnancy, and one book that showed, well more than one book, that showed the birth. Of course, none of them had the sibling there. It was just

the birth from the parent's perspective. And he'd seen births of animals, several both pigs and llamas, one llama, anyway he'd seen that process. And we talked about that it would be really painful for me. We both tried to prepare him for that.

I think we had an advantage where we home school and you can incorporate with your schooling. It's not like where he's at school all day and when he comes home then you try to teach him some more. I think that was helpful.

He hadn't had, well still hasn't had the whole reproductive cycle and I felt like many of the books I shared with him, if it started with conception, I skipped that part cause I didn't feel like he was ready for that. So I'd start into it when the tummy started getting bigger, something like that. And we had books about other animals and the babies and how they delivered those too. But mostly there were three or four, I guess, books that I really liked, A Baby Is Born is one that I really liked which showed photographs. I think he was, well you'll find out when you talk to him, but I think he was pretty well prepared for what, as much as he could be without ever having experienced it. And he went to the class at the hospital with us, so he saw, well he toured the hospital, so he had an idea before hand where he would be going.

(Regarding a sibling class) They had one, but he didn't end up getting to go. They were scheduled to go a couple of days after [youngest sibling] was born. That would have been good.

(Regarding resources) In the children's section of book stores, big book stores that had the sections on birth. I guess, maybe I got a couple at the library.

One thing we would do probably is teach [older

sibling] how to run the camera. Because, I think, for me, it is great to have the video even though it was all over, but he's embarrassed to have anyone see it and I think if he really wanted to do that.

I think if [middle sibling] were to be there, there would have to be somebody that would be there, an adult there for him. Other than that, maybe just finding other books. I felt really good about the way it all went, wouldn't be a lot, I would think of. Maybe take something for them to eat, snacks or something.

After taking a class you're involved. Anything like that that involves you makes you, makes that a, you know, more yours, you owned it.

Yeah, I think maybe if we had had, you know, it was just kind of dropped on us out of the blue, [older sibling] was going to be going and I think maybe if we had had some of these classes or you know our feelings would have been different probably we could have felt more positive about it. It's really foreign to people in our generation to have that. I think that would be good. Just the education part of it letting the grandparents know.

...I had confidence that [father] and [mother] had done all the reading and all the preparation that needed to be done so there was no way I would have questioned it verbally.

He's had a lot of experiences, [father] and [mother] have gone out of their way to give him experiences that a lot of kids don't have.

I think [father] and [mother] were wise in giving [older sibling] the responsibility to take the video. I mean he got mostly floor, he didn't really actually get a good video but at least he was doing something and it was occupying him and

keeping his attention.

We watched videos and read a lot of books.

Guess get 'em really prepared, like if they take pictures or something.....

Mmmm....reading lots of books and stuff.

Practice my (video)taping beforehand. Oh, I don't know. I guess once you've done it you've kinda got the experience so..... I'd say rest up if it's gonna be a long time. Of course you never know when she's gonna have it so that's pretty hard, but, mmmm.... I guess just get prepared a little more and things like that.

You'd probably seen baby pigs being born before that hadn't you, so yeah, a little notion there of what.....

Well, one difference would be you would prepare the child differently than if you were just bringing it home and undoubtedly you did a great deal in that area.

Did you talk to your doctor about it ahead of time?

He was involved in a class or something down there ahead of time wasn't he?

(Response to previous question) Yes, we all went down.

I don't suppose there's any way that the child could actually get acquainted with the nurse that's going to be on duty because nobody knows exactly when it's going to be, but I would think it might be helpful if he could at least get acquainted with one and talk about it one on one. And hope maybe that person would be the one on duty at the time. As it becomes more common which

I would imagine it will.... Maybe that could be looked into, the class to teach them.

And probably growing up on a farm it was a little easier for him than a lot of kids.

The last theme with recurring thoughts, feelings and perceptions of the family was values. The family has a strong sense of what is right and wrong and is very sensitive not to cause problems for others. They demonstrated a high level of respect for each other and their health care providers. Consideration for others and acceptance from others were values that the family regarded as significant. The family was protective of one another and had a strong sense of responsibility for the decisions they had made. The importance of maturity of the sibling was evident from the analysis of interview data. Gentleness, kindness and a sense of modesty were values espoused by the family. Examples to support the values theme are:

I think I was as conscious as you could be in a lot of pain, that, I wanted to be sure he wasn't in anybody's way. I wanted to be sure, you know, that there wasn't any negative feelings on the part of the doctor or the nurse.

Well, and he did real well. He stayed back where he needed to be. Until [youngest sibling] cried his first cry, I was always....we just didn't know

what was going to happen and how [older sibling] would handle that if he wasn't ok. But I would have had those feelings anyway, regardless of whether he'd been there. How did it change it for you?

I don't think a lot because it went so well. I think it helped, if he wanted to, if he was in the wrong spot, or something like that, it would have been real frustrating. I tried to tell him I was going to be by mom and so....but it went real well so he didn't get in the way really.

I was amazed at how gentle [older sibling] was with him and how he knew exactly, I mean he was carrying him from one person to the next and he was doing it really well, you could see that there was an adult nearby him but he really did well.

But [older sibling] is very nurturing, I think he might have been anyway, it's hard to know. But I was thinking today when I asked him to go get [youngest sibling] dressed, and I had already asked him to do several other things, when I did it I thought I don't ever hear him complain when I ask him to something for [youngest sibling]. He complains if he has to do other things but I think there is a real bond there.

I think everybody is so used to us doing something different anyway, it's just, I don't think it's that surprising any more.

So far, I'm sure some of the in-laws thought we were nuts but they don't express it or they are supportive so it's not

Well, you'd mentioned that some people would say well you wouldn't have them there at the time of conception, why would you have them there at the time of birth. For me that's totally different. You're right you wouldn't have, ever.

I really appreciate the fact that none of them are critical of us doing this. That would have taken some of the joy out of it.

I think probably what you are doing is helping prepare nurses, but I think if a nurse has preconceived notions that it's not going to be a good experience, then she comes at it with that attitude and it is kind of evident. Just like the experiences we have sometimes with people who already have in their mind that home schooling is a bad thing.

Well, you know, how when we first wanted to have a baby at home, well now I would prefer having it at the hospital the way we do and then just come home rather than to have a home birth, I just feel more comfortable doing it that way. But I'm not going to say it's wrong to have a home birth. That's fine too.

I think the hardest thing about that all was when [a previous doctor], when I first started talking about it and his attitude toward me and how could I even think of such a stupid thing. I mean actually using the word stupid and idiotic. You know, the word, I don't know.

I guess I'm kinda from the old school, I didn't think too much of it. I thought it was, I never seen neither one of my children born and I didn't know whether that young of a person would realize what he was watching. Then I was kinda worried about what would happen if there were any problems or difficulties, what about, how would it affect [older sibling] because he'd already been pushed..... a death had been pushed onto him, you know and I didn't.....I didn't know whether it was too wise or not to be right truthful about it all.

And I can remember my feeling then at the time when he said he took the movie, you know, I

thought here's this little boy, little eight years old child taking a movie, you know, of his mother having a baby, that's not a comfortable feeling, it wasn't for me.

I think it's making him grown up too fast, myself. Really put a responsibility onto him, you know.

Oh, I guess that's where I came in, you know, just hugging him and we were, I don't know, he was just standing by, you know, just there beside [mother], when we walked in she had [youngest sibling] in her arms and [father] was there by the bed and [older sibling] was there. He was just beaming too. I think he was pretty calm all through it. Very gentle, so gentle.

All I can think about is the way the nurses were when we were in Des Moines with [deceased sibling]. But that's not a birth. I suppose if something would happen, if there was grieving, if the baby wasn't functioning, something was going on, you know, then there is interaction. There would have to be, I would think the nurses then would want to be very sensitive to.. not just to the parents or to that baby, but to the grandparents, those that would be there and that they would be.. ahh.. not make you feel like well you were just an extra but to really be sensitive to your feelings and to be very kind and to reach out and touch and let them know that they are doing all they can for that baby and they'll keep you informed and show you where you can wait and just to be sensitive to the grandparents that would be there.

It's really foreign to people in our generation to have that.

...[mother] is always so generous to let us have the boys when ever we want them, and I've thought so many times how kind it is of her not to resent us giving the boys all this attention or even

having them sit with us in church. I don't think she resents it, she doesn't act like she does and I think that's really being kind. But not all daughter-in-laws would feel that way or sons-in-laws, either way.

It's good for grandparents to think about the parent too. We are fortunate that [mother] doesn't resent us having the boys.

There's always little things, but we're all mature enough and it's ok. We are fortunate to have [maternal grandfather] and [maternal grandmother] on the other side. They sure love [father] and that's wonderful.

I think [older sibling] is a pretty mature young man for his seven years and the other thing is that being a farmer, births are very common, almost daily, not always daily but it is so common, such an every day experience that it probably didn't phase me much.

I didn't know whether he had seen his mother naked and things like that. I just am very modest and quite private about a lot of things and so I had some questions but I can see that it meant a lot to him after it was all said and done.

I think [older sibling] is more mature and has been more mature. I don't know exactly why but than a lot of seven year olds. He's had a lot of experiences, [father] and [mother] have gone out of their way to give him experiences that a lot of kids don't have.

He has many of the characteristics of a typical first child. Even though he wasn't their first child they have treated him pretty much as such and given him a lot more responsibility than you ordinarily expect of younger children.

He's a pretty mature boy.

I was concerned that he not be frightened by it all. So I don't know what part the nurses did play, because we weren't there until it was all over.

Well, making him feel as at ease as possible, comfortable. They're in charge and they call the shots so they.....

I guess only that I think every individual case must be different and every kid would be different and the majority of kids at seven years old I don't think would be mature enough in the first place.

OK, when you kinda try to stay out of people's way and stuff.

When I think about the experience I don't think of anything that wasn't positive about it. Having the oldest child there and then having the middle child come....and I appreciated the fact that the rest of the family didn't think that was a very stupid thing to do. Oh, brother, here they go again doing something different.

I think because they have, it's given freedom to other people to do..... It wasn't until the first grandchild's funeral that we started seeing pictures and displays and so forth and now more and more people are doing this. And yesterday we were down to see our niece.

So I think it's opened other people's ideas and thoughts.

It certainly put extra responsibility on [father], to meet the needs of both of them and especially had something gone wrong. He would've had a tremendous burden to meet the needs of both of them.

Can you say they never fight?

Do you love your brothers?

I mentioned earlier the acceptance that the family had, they accepted what we did.

I think I was a little startled when the whole idea came up but I was, I can be too private, he says. I was trying to put myself in her place and I could not fathom having anyone else other than my husband in the room but I had no objection to it and I can see that it was a very healthy situation.

I would think that he would be about as young as it would make a lot of sense as far as remembering and handling it. And probably growing up on a farm it was a little easier for him than a lot of kids.

I think it would all depend upon the maturity of the child.

I think first of all just their attitude, the attitude they project.

I would think the emotional make of the child makes a great difference. If someone is fearful of new experiences or someone who would be terribly concerned about their mother and so forth.....

But there are children that would be torn to pieces. I remember the first time I saw my mother cry. I was just devastated. Parents would take that into consideration.

They shouldn't be forced to go to a funeral but if they want to be there they need to be, depending on the age. I would think that a boy his age or older involved in a birth, I would hope it would have an effect on them as fathers. How compassionate they were.

Well, in a girl, I would think, the length of the labor and how long the labor process....this could be very satisfying or very scary.

The second research question involved how family members perceived the sibling-attended birth as different than a birth siblings did not attend. Several family members felt that preparation of the sibling would differ depending on whether the birth would or would not be attended by siblings. Nursing functions might expand to include the sibling. Also the father would have added responsibilities and concerns with a sibling-attended birth. Following the sibling-attended birth most family members identified a special bond between the older and youngest siblings. A closeness between mother and older sibling and an openness of the father to his parents also were noted.

Because one sibling did attend and one did not, some family members addressed the concern of the later being excluded. Others did not think he was old enough to be affected by this. The statement: "Birth is a big event in our family!" made by a grandparent reflects the family's positive attitude about new additions to the family in general. Examples of the

perceptions of family members are:

I wanted to be sure he wasn't in anybody's way. I wanted to be sure, you know, that there wasn't any negative feelings on the part of the doctor or the nurse.

He stayed back where he needed to be. Until [youngest sibling] cried his first cry, I was always....we just didn't know what was going to happen and how [older sibling] would handle that if he wasn't ok. But I would have had those feelings anyway, regardless of whether he'd been there. How did it change it for you?

I don't think a lot because it went so well. I think it helped, if he wanted to, if he was in the wrong spot, or something like that, it would have been real frustrating. I tried to tell him I was going to be by mom and so....but it went real well so he didn't get in the way really.

I think we both worried beforehand, that if it was a long labor like the others had been, he would have been bored we were afraid and I wouldn't have wanted [father] to leave. And if it had been as long as the others had been, you would have been there. So that would have taken care of that too.

To do that rather than have such strict rules where, you know, just the mother and father and the kids can look through the window....

For the child.....to have him go from being something to a baby that comes out and is all, you know, the way they look as soon as they are born. it's a whole different thing than coming to a hospital and seeing this little one wrapped up in a blanket.....going and seeing the process.

Well, one difference would be you would prepare the child differently than if you were just bringing it home and undoubtedly you did a great

deal in that area.

It's also different for a parent not only are you there for your wife but you're also there for the sibling.

It becomes just a real connectedness doesn't it? The whole....there's just a connecting, you know, bond all the way through the family this way. I think it's a beautiful thing, you know, to have happen.

It certainly put extra responsibility on [father], to meet the needs of both of them and especially had something gone wrong. He would've had a tremendous burden to meet the needs of both of them.

It wasn't that many years ago they didn't even let the fathers in and how you were just like in a separate world and this was just you and that baby's little thing. They weren't even a part of this and how it's just opened this up and it's made it more a family thing. It is really sad what the father missed out on, now even they are allowing the siblings.

The third research question asked how family members perceived the sibling-attended birth experience had affected attachment, sibling relationships, and family relationships. Although responses varied, some members perceived an attachment between the older and younger sibling. The mother spoke of the nurturing behavior of the older sibling and of his helpfulness with the younger sibling and of the younger calling for

the older sibling when he was gone. Other family members, however, were not sure that attending the birth made a difference. Changing relationships between siblings have been noted as they grow older. Family relationships were described as supportive and beautiful but few members were certain that the birth attendance had made any difference in the relationships between them. Examples of the subjects' responses are:

I think, when I watched the video, I was amazed at how gentle [older sibling] was with him and how he knew exactly, I mean he was carrying him from one person to the next and he was doing it really well, you could see that there was an adult nearby him but he really did well.

It's hard to know if it would be any different or not because [middle sibling] really likes him and he wasn't there.

But [older sibling] is very nurturing, I think he might have been anyway, it's hard to know. But I was thinking today when I asked him to go get [youngest sibling] dressed, and I had already asked him to do several other things, when I did it I thought I don't ever hear him complain when I ask him to something for [youngest sibling]. He complains if he has to do other things but I think there is a real bond there.

I think it's hard to know.

And the age too, he's at the age where he is more responsible and can do a lot.

(family relationships) I don't remember their

response, do you remember their response when we told them [older sibling] was going? Did they know? Did we tell them even?

Well, I think, whenever you have a group of people and you all have the same, you know, remember when we....instead of me saying, well I remember when you were born and this is what it was like. But for [older sibling] he can say, I remember when, and we've all had this shared experience.

I think everybody is so used to us doing something different anyway, it's just, I don't think it's that surprising any more.

So far, I'm sure some of the in-laws thought we were nuts but they don't express it or they are supportive so it's not

I really appreciate the fact that none of them are critical of us doing this. That would have taken some of the joy out of it.

Since he was the middle one too, you know, and it's taken him longer to bond than, I think he kinda felt they were all there and he was here with us.

It really was a real bonding thing with [older sibling], I think that's when I noticed that [middle sibling] had been, more so, that [middle sibling] had been left out, I mean that came to me real quick, because there was some real bonding there, [older sibling] had just, you know, this was his boy, his baby.

I think it bonded his mother and him together more too, [older sibling] and his mom. I think, I mean, from then on seemed like she's been willing to share anything with him. You know, to me, and then like you say [middle sibling] has been left out.

I think there was a bonding with [older sibling] and his mom.

Yea, I really do, and I don't know how his dad felt about it. I mean I never noticed anything between his dad and [older sibling] but I've noticed from his mom since then that this very close relationship.

I think it has let [father] share more with us. He's been more willing to share with us certain things. I mean he, I don't know whether he would have done it otherwise but he does it, he might of just be something that he does, you know, normally, I mean he's.....

Our families are so closely interrelated it's hard to tell if that one incident has made the difference, you know, cause I thought, you know, [father], we're really very close. [mother] is more of a private person and she's a...of course more comfortable with her family but, you know, there's no problem as far as we know there's just a freedom I think with the family. I don't know if that one incident has made a difference.

I wouldn't say it had and I wouldn't say it hadn't.

One thing, I just happened to think, I have been observing though, lately, just the last ahh.....well we when [middle sibling], you know, here he was this middle one, [older sibling] and [youngest sibling] were, they were all kind of here, so we really made a point to make [middle sibling] the focus of our attention and I've noticed when sometimes when they'll come in and we'll make over [middle sibling] first and [youngest sibling] will kind of stand and look as if.. well I'm the baby, you know, I mean, and he's the one but we make over [middle sibling] first, and I've notice now that [middle sibling] and [youngest sibling] are drawing together. I think

[older sibling] is taking on more the role of a big brother caring, the caring and [youngest sibling] and [middle sibling] are playing together and I noticed this wasn't going on before. [middle sibling] was a little more, he wasn't happy, there's many times he'd said to me..I wish I was the baby, you know, he was feeling left out, he was not happy with where he was at and that's why we would do that. I notice last night he was sitting, they were sitting here playing monopoly with [paternal grandfather] and [youngest sibling] came up and [middle sibling] would take his hand and go like this under his little chin and talk to him and then he'd go on and play. He wouldn't do that a few months ago, he was more, he showed more resentment or anger but now [youngest sibling] asks for him now, he wants [middle sibling] now, he asks for him, so there is a bonding taking place with [middle sibling] and [youngest sibling]. I've been really thrilled to see that. And it's not leaving [older sibling] out, he has that role of being more the caretaker and feeling more included.

[middle sibling] is coming into his own more so, now. Maybe you have noticed at church when he sits with us. [middle sibling] will be sure to sit with us. He knows how we made special effort to make him realize how, we tell him how wonderful he is, what a winner he is.

Well he has talked so many times about what an awesome experience it was. I am sure that he greatly appreciates the fact that his folks had enough confidence in him and included him. Probably none of the other boys will ever have that opportunity and I don't know that there would be any jealousy or anything and I don't know that there is any special bond now between him and [youngest sibling] that isn't evident also between him and [middle sibling] so I don't know if that made any difference.

Oh, I don't think so.

I wouldn't see any. We're just so lucky that they are so close by and basically spend one evening a week here anyway. Plus we go to college basketball games together another night a week so we spend a lot of time with all our grandchildren.

I don't feel any different because of it.

I guess only that I think every individual case must be different and every kid would be different and the majority of kids at seven years old I don't think would be mature enough in the first place.

I think it's an experience he'll never forget.

(When sibling was asked about his relationship with his youngest sibling) Pretty good.

(When asked if it made a difference) It might have. Yeah.

(When asked if the relationship was different than most kids have with sibling) Mmmmm.... Yeah.

...and I appreciated the fact that the rest of the family didn't think that was a very stupid thing to do. Oh, brother, here they go again doing something different.

I think beforehand that was one of our concerns was what if the situation didn't turn out very well. Now I think having done it once that even if it didn't it would still be a bonding family situation.

It becomes just a real connectedness doesn't it? The whole....there's just a connecting, you know, bond all the way through the family this way. I think it's a beautiful thing, you know, to have happen.

It certainly put extra responsibility on [father], to meet the needs of both of them and especially had something gone wrong. He would've had a tremendous burden to meet the needs of both of them.

It would usually be indicative of the bond that was already within families to consider including the child.

Can you say they never fight?

No but the oldest is very nurturing to the youngest, he takes good care of him, he looks out for him. And if he isn't home the youngest wants to know where he is and calls his name over and over.

A lot would depend on the distance between the two ages. I mean the older siblings are at a more competitive age. Whether he had watched.....been there for either birth I don't think ultimately would have made as much difference in their relationship as the age range.

Like a heart bond?

Some of the close attachments don't develop until adulthood.

Do you love your brothers? (Directed to the oldest sibling) Yes.

I mentioned earlier the acceptance that the family had, they accepted what we did.

I don't remember getting much feedback from my brother and sisters.

I think I was a little startled when the whole idea came up but I was, I can be too private, he says. I was trying to put myself in her place and I could not fathom having anyone else other than

my husband in the room but I had no objection to it and I can see that it was a very healthy situation.

I doubt it. I'm more interested in five years down the road how much will he remember of the whole experience and will, you know..... Can you remember it very vividly now, yet?

Yeah, I remember it.

You can?

It's only been two years. What about four or five years?

He will be a real nuisance at times and get into his older brothers things.

He climbs up on the table and throws all my stuff now.

I wonder if...I was just throwing this out....it means as much or more to the parents, to include the sibling as it does to the sibling - like he says - he wasn't aware of the pain - they're kind of off in their... Cause they haven't had the experiences. But for the parents to share this with the siblings maybe it's a stronger bond for them and to encourage them in their family bonding as much as it is for the sibling.

I like what you say, if the child has the opportunity to be as involved as they want. Same as with death. They shouldn't be forced to go to a funeral but if they want to be there, they need to be, depending on the age. I would think that a boy his age or older involved in a birth, I would hope it would have an effect on them as fathers. How compassionate they were.

I think for us, anytime you have a shared experience and can all say, "remember when," it

makes a bond that's entirely different than just showing pictures, you know, if you don't have the shared experience and memories.

The final research question involved the nursing interventions and support measures family members would recommend to health care professionals to enhance the birth experience for the entire family. Clearly the family was sensitive to the responses of the nurses who provided care. They expected a nurse would possess good clinical and interpersonal skills. Examples of the responses of the family to the research question are:

I wanted to be sure, you know, that there wasn't any negative feelings on the part of the doctor or the nurse.

She was expecting twins herself and she was great, very helpful. I kind of forget about all, like giving the little thing a bath and everything and all, you know. It's good we had her to do that process. Then we had another nurse on checkout. She was really good with the boys. She made that comment, she goes, I really enjoy the older kids. The babies are great and stuff but she interacted with [middle sibling] and [older sibling] well, real well.

She let them get him dressed to go home.

She just really went out of her way I thought letting them do a lot of the stuff, cause I knew she could've done it quicker and gotten us out of there but she took the time.

She had them right there during the bath showing them what she was doing.

Just included them, that was really good.

I kind of remember them showing [older sibling] where he could sit and put his things, you know.

Involving everybody was good.

Well, if they had, you know, basically I think the nursing staff was there for me [mother]...which, that's where they should be. And with [youngest sibling's] birth, they had their hands full just getting everything out and ready.

I don't know how far to go with what is their responsibility?

I wonder if some of them had bad experiences about siblings or has there been a lot of sibling-attended births around?

I can see where if it was a long labor, it would really cause some problems, you know, like if we had to walk around the hall or something, you know, or press on her back, things like that, I think the child would really get bored or antsy. I don't know what would happen.

Well, there was a TV in the room.

Yeah, that's true. Maybe some kids videos, cause there's nothing on TV for them to watch. If they could have some classic movies or cartoons or something like that to entertain the kids.

That would be helpful if it was a long labor.

I think anything that they would have done. Well, anything that an adult does, positively, towards your child, I think you appreciate, no matter where you are. And so if they... maybe... just

making them somehow feel like they're glad they are there. Or, let me know if there's something I can do for you. I don't know, just anything that isn't negative.

Maybe take something for them to eat, snacks or something.

Maybe if... having, you know, the hospital prepares a nice meal for the mother and father, maybe if siblings are going to be a part of it do a family dinner there in the room for everybody. I know [older sibling] and [middle sibling] and I had to go downstairs to the cafeteria and leave [mother] and [youngest sibling] up in the room, and it's hard to get their food and to have it brought to the room would have been nice. Anything like that where we could have stayed together.

I think probably what you are doing is helping prepare nurses, but I think if a nurse has preconceived notions that it's not going to be a good experience, then she comes at it with that attitude and it is kind of evident. Just like the experiences we have sometimes with people who already have in their mind that home schooling is a bad thing.

Hospitals have since changed tremendously, you know, and that's why I think it's neat to be able to go to the hospital and have the baby and have the family there and come home. And for hospitals to be willing....

To do that rather than have such strict rules where, you know, just the mother and father and the kids can look through the window....

I don't even remember the nurse being in the room, do you? No, I don't either.

It seems to me like she came in and took

[mother]'s blood pressure and stuff after we were in there a while but I don't remember a nurse being in there.....and then I think they came and got the baby before we left too, no they didn't. When we left [middle sibling] got to stay and they all came home together.

Because they came home in three or four hours after [youngest sibling] was born. All I can think about is the way the nurses were when we were in Des Moines with [deceased sibling]. But that's not a birth. I suppose if something would happen, if there was grieving, if the baby wasn't functioning, something was going on, you know, then there is interaction. There would have to be, I would think the nurses then would want to be very sensitive to.. not just to the parents or to that baby, but to the grandparents, those that would be there and that they would be.. ahh.. not make you feel like well you were just an extra but to really be sensitive to your feelings and to be very kind and to reach out and touch and let them know that they are doing all they can for that baby and they'll keep you informed and show you were you can wait and just to be sensitive to the grandparents that would be there. But as far as just the family being there, there wasn't any involvement with the nurses and I don't know what they would have done in there cause it was just such a family affair.

Then we didn't get there until at least an hour and a half after it was born, you know, if we had been there quicker it might have been different, the nurses might have been there. I agree.

There really wasn't any reason for the nurses to be in there, they would have been an extra almost.

That's the only thing I remember is the nurse coming in to check the blood pressure and pulse and then she left right away. She checked on the baby too then she left.

(When asked about grandparent classes) Especially for the grandparents that aren't close. There are some grandparents that don't get to see them for a long time, really, you know.

Then sometimes the grandparents end up doing a lot of the parenting. You would feel like you are part of that child, too. After taking a class you're involved. Anything like that that involves you makes you, makes that a, you know, more yours, you owned it.

I think maybe if we had had, you know, it was just kind of dropped on us out of the blue, [older sibling] was going to be going and I think maybe if we had had some of these classes or you know our feelings would have been different probably we could have felt more positive about it. It's really foreign to people in our generation to have that. I think that would be good. Just the education part of it letting the grandparents know. And you know, maybe, perhaps letting the daughter, having the daughter-in-law or son-in-law and son and daughter-in-law, have them understand, help them to understand the grandparents involvement in this, you don't realize, you don't have any realization as a parent what it means to grandparents to have a grandchild. And for them to understand it. I would think that might help relationships between those two generations if the parents understood how precious that grandchild is.

I think the nurse could make the difference with that in this situation with the mother and the grandparent. You bet.

Apparently they were excellent with [older sibling]. I think [mother] had some concerns that she did not want him in the room during hard labor and if any thing had gone wrong she wanted a way for him to be taken out of there yet at the same time she wanted [father] in there and I don't know

exactly what arrangement they had but I think the nurses must have played a part there. Because by the time we got down there he knew he could go down to the refrigerator and get juice, this was all a big, big deal to him and so apparently part of the time he was out of the room and I'm not sure whether [father] was with him or whether a nurse was or what, you'll have to ask them about that but that was another of my concerns was....labor can be so hard some times and I was concerned that he not be frightened by it all. So I don't know what part the nurses did play, because we weren't there until it was all over.

Well, making him feel as at ease as possible, comfortable. They're in charge and they call the shots so they.....

There was some special bond that developed just during the labor, I think, with this particular nurse. Whether, it seems to me she had just had twins or was expecting twins, or something, I mean she was close enough to the situation that she know exactly what [mother] was going through and I remember her saying that she was just wonderful.

Guess get 'em really prepared, like if they take pictures or something.....

OK, when you kinda try to stay out of people's way and stuff.

(When asked if a nurse spending time would be good) Might help.

Just try to, like, help the kids out,... to feel at home.

I don't suppose there's any way that the child could actually get acquainted with the nurse that's going to be on duty because nobody knows exactly when it's going to be, but I would think it might be helpful if he could at least get

acquainted with one and talk about it one on one. And hope maybe that person would be the one on duty at the time. As it becomes more common which I would imagine it will.... Maybe that could be looked into, the class to teach them.

I think first of all just their attitude, the attitude they project. Involving the dads and child and they taking the time to explain things to the child.

Are the nurses in general in favor of this? This would make a difference.

Discussion

Although no specific case studies related to sibling-attended birth were found in the review of literature, many of the findings of this study are consistent with the findings of other researchers who have explored the sibling-attended birth experience. For example, Anderson (1981) identified similar themes of inclusion, exclusion and preparation in a comparison study of a group of children who attended the birth of a sibling and a group who did not attend a sibling's birth. The study addressed sibling relationships following a sibling-attended birth and found nearly all the 43 siblings who attended birth were very close to the infant and wanted to participate in its care even months following the birth. Many family members in

this case study also identified a close relationship between the infant and the sibling who attended his birth.

Three recurring themes identified from research conducted by Krutsky (1985) were similar to findings of this case study. The first theme of enhanced family unity, following a sibling attended birth, was addressed by the case study family as well as the 16 couples in Krutsky's investigation. There also were similar responses by the case study family and the 16 couples in Krutsky's study regarding the second theme, the perception that a sibling-attended birth was a small part of the larger positive family relationship. The third theme involved repeating the sibling-attended birth experience if possible. The parents and sibling in the case study indicated they would certainly like to repeat the experience as did the couples in Krutsky's study.

In a descriptive study, Daniels (1983) found that mothers nearly always had positive responses to their child being included at birth; fathers also had positive responses but expressed concerns about the

child if there were complications. Daniels also recommended adequate preparation and a minimum age requirement of five years. The parents in this case study had similar positive responses and the father was concerned about the child should there be complications with the birth. Preparation was considered important by several family members and both parents identified a concern about the younger sibling, at age three, being too young to attend the birth.

Guidelines developed by Mehl et al. (1977) from their observations of 20 children at the time of sibling-attended birth were similar to recommendations made by family members in this case study. Adequate sibling preparation was important to the case study family and also to researchers, Mehl et al. The presence of a responsible adult to support the child also was advised by both groups.

The family members in this case study expressed the importance of family relationships, sibling relationships and attachment in a variety of ways. The couple chose to include the older sibling in the birth event because of their family oriented lifestyle. They

chose to exclude the younger sibling due to concern about his young age and maturity level. The grandparents, however, were concerned about his feeling left out and focused extra attention on this child. Several family members indicated preparation for a sibling-attended birth would benefit them and perhaps enhance the relationships between family members. Families and nurses who are aware of the importance of attachment and methods to enhance attachment among family members can better facilitate the process. The family's values of respect, gentleness, kindness, modesty, consideration, sensitivity, and maturity can be found throughout the interviews and serve to enhance family relationships and attachment as well.

Although the research literature on sibling-attended birth contributes to nurses' understanding of the practice, nursing interventions and support measures were seldom addressed. Members of this case study family indicated that nurses could make a difference in the relationships between generations as well as between siblings in a family. Classes conducted by nurses were suggested to help grandparents

understand the changes in childbearing practices that have taken place. It may be significant that some family members did not remember nurses even being involved and that the father first remembered a "grumpy nurse."

Nurses' positive attitudes and behaviors toward the siblings were very important to the family. Involving the siblings and allowing them to assist in the care of the newborn were nursing actions which helped to facilitate attachment and were greatly appreciated by the family.

Considering the physical as well as the emotional needs of the family by providing a family meal together and snacks for the sibling were recommended. In addition, diversional activities for the sibling would be helpful in the case of a prolonged or difficult labor.

Limitations

There are many limitations to a study of this type that explores the thoughts, feelings and perceptions of a family with nine members. The first major limitation to this study pertains to the sample. The sample

consisted of one family, including a mother and father, their three children, and the maternal and paternal grandparents of the children, all of whom had experienced a sibling-attended birth. The family was not randomly selected and the findings of the study may not necessarily be representative of other families' experiences with sibling-attended birth. Therefore, the ability to generalize the findings from this study to other families is limited.

A second major limitation of the study that must be considered was related to the data collection procedures used. The data collection method relied on the interviewing skills of the researcher and the subjects' abilities to recall and relate their thoughts, feelings and perceptions. The researcher's interviewing skills and desire to maintain positive family relationships may have limited the responses of the subjects. The use of a tape recorder also may have inhibited open disclosure by some of the family members.

Another limitation of the study to be considered related to the data analysis. There are few clearly

defined procedures for the analysis of qualitative data and the presentation of conclusions. Because the four conceptual themes chosen by the researcher are subjective, some themes may have been overemphasized while other themes may have been missed in the analysis of data. Categorization of data was complicated by the overlapping of various themes.

The fourth major limitation of the study pertained to the possibility of researcher bias. The researcher has known the subjects for many years and may have avoided asking further questions on some topics in an attempt to prevent possible family conflicts. In addition the researcher's experiences as a nurse caring for childbearing families may have influenced many aspects of the study, including data analysis.

Recommendations for Further Study

It must be recognized that research about sibling-attended birth has had little emphasis in the last decade. Further research about the sibling-attended birth experience will become increasingly significant as the practice becomes recognized as an option for families to promote

attachment and positive family and sibling relationships.

The first recommendation for further study is to replicate this study with another family who has experienced a sibling-attended birth. This family might be from a metropolitan area or from another culture. The importance of this replication would identify whether similar thoughts, feeling and perceptions are experienced by families from different locations and ethnic backgrounds. It also would be important to determine if similar themes were found in data analysis.

The study should then be replicated with a larger sample of families to examine if the conceptual themes are representative of the thoughts, feeling and perceptions of other families who have experienced sibling-attended births. Future research should consider studying the family prenatally and for an extended period of time following the sibling-attended birth. Additionally, grandparent-attended birth experiences should be studied as well. Investigating the changes in relationships among generations

following a birth in the family is recommended.

As more families identify similar conceptual themes of a sibling-attended birth, a conceptual model can be developed. A survey or questionnaire could be developed, using this model, to assess and compare the thoughts, feeling and perceptions of families involved in a sibling-attended birth. Understanding will increase as more studies are conducted and this expanding knowledge base will be useful to nursing practice, nursing education, nursing research and nursing administration.

Implications for Advanced Nursing Practice

Data from this study offer nursing some new insights into understanding what a family experiences with a sibling-attended birth. It also increases awareness that the nurse is the health care professional in the best position to influence attachment, sibling relationships and family relationships at the time of a sibling-attended birth. Although nurses possess knowledge and skill in the care of the childbearing family, understanding the effects of a sibling-attended birth from the family's

perspective can expand their knowledge. Assessment of the themes of inclusion, exclusion, preparation and values can direct the establishment of many important goals in the provision of comprehensive health care for childbearing families. Awareness of the families' thoughts, feelings and perceptions can lead to transformations in current nursing practices in childbirth settings and nurses will be better prepared to consider the needs of individual childbearing families.

The themes of inclusion, exclusion, preparation and values have provided a major source of content to be applied in nursing practice, education, research and administration to enhance attachment, sibling and family relationships before, during and after a sibling-attended birth. These themes can serve as a framework for current and future nursing practice.

A major implication for advanced nursing practice to better prepare families for childbirth involves providing information about the practice of giving birth with siblings in attendance. Nursing education must ensure that students of nursing receive

preparation in this area. It will also be important to inform expectant mothers and fathers of the option to include their children and other family members in the birth, should they choose this option. Nursing practice must support the decision and be careful not to allow personal biases to cause the family to feel disapproval. Prenatal classes specifically for families planning a sibling attended birth would be valuable.

The grandparents in this study expressed a desire for preparation before a sibling-attended birth took place in the family. A suggested reading list should be provided for grandparents and a booklet developed and made available that would aid in their understanding. Grandparent classes should be offered and developed according to the needs of the individual participants.

The need for preparation for those siblings attending birth became apparent as the interviews with the sibling and family took place. Nursing must identify the learning needs of children who will attend a sibling's birth and assist the parents in addressing

those needs. The sibling in this study was prepared for the birth by reading books and watching videotapes. There was no sibling preparation material found by the mother that included the siblings at the birth. A suggested reading list could be provided to parents and additional booklets written to help prepare the sibling for the experience. The sibling in this study has written a book as part of his home school program entitled The Birth I'll Never Forget. With his permission this book might be shared with other children to aid in sibling preparation. The sibling wished he had been better able to videotape the birth. Parents may be advised to consider teaching the child to operate their videotaping equipment.

At the time of admission into the birthing unit nursing can assist the siblings as well as the parents to feel welcome and at ease. The older sibling in the study indicated that it would be important for nurses to help children feel comfortable. Nurses need to understand the emotional needs of the family as well as the physical needs and extend a welcome to all family members included in the birth and following the birth.

Diversional activities for siblings might include videotapes and toys appropriate for their ages. The play resources of a hospital's pediatrics unit might be shared with the birthing unit to provide the sibling with activities should the labor be long or complicated.

Nurses can facilitate understanding between generations in a family and promote interaction between each person present at the birth. Sibling interaction soon after birth was valued by the family and could be encouraged by nurses. Nurses could delineate special infant characteristics and allow the sibling to participate in the initial care of the infant. Easy access to the infant should be permitted when possible. Siblings, grandparents and other family members not present at the birth could be invited by the nurse to interact with the infant and in this way celebrate the birth.

The parents voiced some dismay about the family being separated at meal time. In collaboration with the dietary department and the family, nursing could arrange for meals and snacks to be provided to prevent

separation of the family during their hospital stay.

Some family members did not have a clear sense of nursing's role during childbirth. It may be advisable to inform the family of usual nursing responsibilities at the time of the birth of an infant. In addition, families need to know about the advanced practice roles of nurse midwives and nurse practitioners. This could be in printed form or incorporated into childbirth education classes that involve several family members. Families should be encouraged to participate in decisions about the nursing care offered at one of the most important times in their lives.

The changing health care environment presents many challenges to nurses who provide care to childbearing families. The hospital stay for a mother and infant following vaginal delivery is being limited to 24 hours by certain health insurance companies. This shortened length of stay and the increased use of unlicensed care providers may put nursing's therapeutic role in jeopardy. The mother in this study left the hospital by choice, about six hours after the birth. The parents valued the care provided by the nurse before discharge.

Nursing administration must recognize the importance of nurses in providing care to childbearing families.

Nursing research will need to continue to expand knowledge about the sibling-attended birth experience and how it affects attachment. Researchers need to continue to use qualitative as well as quantitative methods to explore attachment, sibling and family relationships.

The findings of a qualitative study of this type are not meant to be generalized. Nurses, however, may better understand and meet the needs of childbearing families considering a sibling-attended birth by looking at another sibling-attended birth experience.

This study provides tangible evidence that suggests attachment may be enhanced by a sibling's presence at birth. Attachment is considered essential to children's physical and emotional growth and development. Therefore nurses working with childbearing families would do well to understand the concept of attachment and the effects of a sibling-attended birth experience on families.

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APPENDIX A

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

Data Collection Instrument

The data collection instrument utilized in this study contained questions identified in the literature and developed by the researcher. These general questions assisted in obtaining descriptive information of the subjects' thoughts, perceptions, and feelings prior to, during, and after the birth of their new family member. The instrument was divided into three parts, consisting of questions directed to the parents, grandparents, and child. Questions to the parents were:

1. What lead you to the decision to include your son in the birth of a new baby?
2. What did you do to prepare him for this occasion?
3. In what way did the child's presence affect the birth experience for you?
4. What was the response of the nursing staff attending the birth?
5. What might you do differently should you give birth to another child in the future?
6. What were your observations regarding the initial meeting of siblings?

7. How do you perceive your son's being present at his sibling's birth affected the attachment and relationship between them?
8. What effect do you think this experience has had on family relationships?
9. What could the nursing staff have done that would have enhanced the family's experience at this birth?

Questions to the grandparents included:

1. How did you feel when you learned that your grandson was to be present at the birth of his sibling?
2. What were your impressions of siblings at birth in general?
3. How do you perceive your grandson's being present at his sibling's birth affected the relationship between them?
4. How were you involved in this process?
5. What effect do you think this experience has had on family relationships?
6. What would you suggest to nurses that might facilitate family involvement in the birth event?

Questions to the sibling were:

1. When did you learn that you were going to be a big brother again?
2. Tell me about your experience with the birth of your baby brother.
3. How did you find out that you would be present when the new baby was born?
4. What part of the birth stands out in your memory?
5. What would you suggest that might help other children to be involved in the birth of their new baby brother or sister?
6. What might nurses do to help children who come to the hospital to participate in the birth of their sibling?
7. How would you describe your relationship with your youngest brother now?
8. What did the nurses do to help you be a part of this birth?

Questions directed to the whole family together included the original four research questions.

1. What thoughts, feelings and perceptions do you have regarding the birthing experience?

2. How do you perceive the sibling-attended birth as different than a birth siblings do not attend.
3. How do you perceive the sibling attended birth experience has affected the following:
 - a. attachment
 - b. sibling relationships
 - c. family relationships
4. What nursing interventions and support measures would family members recommend to health care professionals to enhance the birth experience for the entire family?

APPENDIX B
CONSENT FORMS

*To be completed by the Investigator:*Date Submitted: 12-14-94Proposal Title: A CASE STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF A SIBLING-ATTENDED BIRTHInvestigator: Marilyn Humrichouse Telephone 515-497-5432Faculty advisor: (for student research): Sandra L. Sellers Dept. NursingReturn to: Sandra L. Sellers

Name

422 Olin Hall X2754

Street Address of Campus Office

City, State, Zip (if off campus)

To be completed by the Human Subjects Research Review Committee Chair:

Date received: _____

Decision:

☐ Approval, no risk☒ Approval, minimum risk☐ Approval, subjects at risk, but benefits outweigh risks☐ No approval. Subjects at risk or proposal does not adequately address risks, benefits or procedures.

Reasons for Disapproval: _____

Suggested Changes: _____

HSRRC Chair: HH ClaphamDate: 2-16-95

Participant Cover Letter

Date _____

Dear _____:

Sibling-attended birth has become an event worthy of study. Issues a family faces prior to, during and after the birth are of interest to nurses providing care to families. However, nurses may not understand what the family perceives as important at this time.

The purpose of this study is to discover what you as a family member feel and think about this experience in your life. The study will address your experiences so that nursing can understand and more effectively care for families in the future who include siblings in the birth of new family members.

This study is being conducted in connection with my Master's in Nursing degree at Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa, under the supervision of Sandra L. Sellers, Ph.D., R.N., Drake University, phone 515-271-2754.

Because you are a member of a family who has experienced a sibling-attended birth, I would greatly appreciate your participation in this study. It will consist of taped interviews. The maternal grandparents will be interviewed for one-half hour; paternal grandparents will be interviewed for one-half hour; the mother and father will be interviewed together for one hour; and the sibling present at birth will be interviewed for two, one-half hour sessions. Finally the family will be interviewed and observed together for one hour. The interviews will consist of questions and discussions regarding your thoughts, perceptions and feelings about this experience. The location and time of these interviews will be your choice and at your convenience. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you are free at any time to stop the interviews. Your names will not be used and kept confidential. On completion of the study, the tapes will be destroyed.

If you would like a summary of this study, a copy may be obtained by notifying me at the address below. Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Humrichouse
27697 270th Street
Eldora, Iowa 50527

Family Informed Consent

I, the undersigned, consent to be interviewed by Marilyn Humrichouse, a graduate nursing student of Drake University. I understand that I will be asked questions about my thoughts, feelings, and perceptions about a sibling-attended birth in my family. I understand that I will be interviewed in my home or my choice of place, at a time convenient to me. I also understand that interviews will be conducted in which maternal and paternal grandparents will be interviewed as couples; the mother and father will be interviewed together; and the sibling present at birth will be interviewed alone. Each interview will be tape recorded and will remain confidential. I have been informed that I can refuse to answer any questions or decide to terminate the interview at any point. I also understand this study will be confidential and have no greater psychological risk than those ordinarily encountered in daily life. I understand the results of this study will be provided to me upon request to Marilyn Humrichouse. I freely consent to participate in this study.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>PARTICIPANT</u>	<u>SIGNATURE</u>
_____	Mother:	_____
_____	Father:	_____
_____	Grandparent:	_____
_____	Grandparent:	_____
_____	Grandparent:	_____
_____	Grandparent:	_____
_____	Sibling:	_____
_____	Sibling:	_____
_____	Sibling:	_____
_____	Researcher:	_____

PARENTS INTERVIEW

APPENDIX C

Parents Interview

The following interview format consists of the researcher's questions and comments in all upper case characters and the subjects' answers and comments in both upper and lower case characters. This one hour interview with the mother and father of the children in this study, was conducted in their home. All names have been deleted to protect the privacy of the family. In place of a name the person's role in the family has been inserted in brackets.

THANK YOU FOR LETTING ME INTERVIEW YOU, I REALLY APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY AND WANT TO LEARN ABOUT SIBLING-ATTENDED BIRTH AND HOW IT DOES AFFECT FAMILIES. WHAT LEAD YOU TO THE DECISION TO INCLUDE YOUR SON?

MOTHER: Well I'd been thinking about it, I don't know, probably by four or five months into the pregnancy I'd been thinking about it that it might be a really neat experience to have [older sibling] come with us. But I didn't say anything to him. And [father] and I talked about it a little bit, [father] wasn't sure.

FATHER: I'd never thought about it.

MOTHER: Yeah, but then it was, I think, when [older sibling] asked if there was any chance he could come, then we started talking about it more seriously. I guess I just, I thought it would be so much of the way we live our life is, you know, family oriented and I wanted to at least explore the possibility of him coming.

FATHER: It took me quite a while before I decided if it would be a good idea. I didn't know if I wanted to share it with him. I just thought, oh, when he gets older and he gets married then he'll maybe have the experience, you know. So that was the first thought when you asked and of course I was always scared, what if it didn't come out right?

A GENUINE CONCERN.

FATHER: Yeah! Would've been hard enough for me, let alone there's my son there that's trying to have those feelings.

SO WHAT FINALIZED YOUR DECISION? YOU SAID HIS ASKING?

MOTHER: Well, I felt we needed to decide between the two of us first whether we could come to an agreement and then I talked to you to see if you'd been a part of any and then I talked to [obstetrician] to see whether he was in agreement.

AND HOW DID HE RESPOND?

FATHER: Oh, he said bring as many people as you want as long as there was room for him.

MOTHER: He did. It was fine and he said he'd had a few experiences with siblings, not a lot, it didn't sound like, but he was fine with it and at that time you had mentioned that maybe you could be there for [older sibling] and so I felt really comfortable with....I felt comfortable with him anyway because I felt he was mature enough to handle it but, I thought that was going to be great if you were going to be able to be there.

DID YOU DO ANY READING OR READ ABOUT ANY OTHER EXPERIENCES?

MOTHER: I didn't find very much. In fact I don't know if I found anything other than the only places that I found anything about siblings being there were home births. I didn't find anything about siblings and hospital births.

IT'S BEEN A REAL SEARCH TO FIND THINGS THAT ARE WRITTEN AND THAT IS PART OF THE REASON I'M DOING THE STUDY. WHAT DID YOU DO TO PREPARE [OLDER SIBLING] FOR THE EXPERIENCE?

MOTHER: I had quite a few books on the before, you know, pregnancy, and one book that showed, well more than one book, that showed the birth. Of course, none of them had the sibling there. It was just the birth from the parent's perspective. And he'd seen births of animals, several both pigs and llamas, one llama, anyway he'd seen that process. And we talked about that it would be really painful for me. We both tried to prepare him for that. Can you think of other things?

FATHER: I think we had an advantage where we home school and you can incorporate with your schooling. It's not like where he's at school all day and when he comes home then you try to teach him some more. I think that was helpful.

MOTHER: He hadn't had, well still hasn't had the whole reproductive cycle and I felt like many of the books I shared with him, if it started with conception, I skipped that part cause I didn't feel like he was ready for that. So I'd start into it when the tummy started getting bigger, something like that. And we had books about other animals and the babies and how they delivered those too. But mostly there were three or four, I guess, books that I really liked, "A Baby Is Born" is one that I really liked which showed photographs. I think he was, well you'll find out when you talk to him, but I think he was pretty well prepared for what, as much as he could be without ever having experienced it. And he went to the class at the hospital with us, so he saw, well he toured the hospital, so he had an idea before hand where he would be going.

DID THEY HAVE A SIBLING CLASS?

MOTHER: They had one, but he didn't end up getting to go. They were scheduled to go a couple of days after [youngest sibling] was born. That would have been good.

WHERE DID YOU FIND YOUR LITERATURE, THE BOOKS THAT YOU

USED?

MOTHER: In the children's section of book stores, big book stores that had the sections on birth. I guess, maybe I got a couple at the library.

I WAS THINKING YOUR LEBOYER BOOK..

MOTHER: I did, yeah, I showed it to him.

IN WHAT WAY DID THE PRESENCE OF A CHILD AFFECT THE BIRTH FOR YOU TWO? HOW DID YOU FEEL IT WAS DIFFERENT PERHAPS THAN THE OTHER BIRTHS?

MOTHER: I think I was as conscious as you could be in a lot of pain, that, I wanted to be sure he wasn't in anybody's way. I wanted to be sure, you know, that there wasn't any negative feelings on the part of the doctor or the nurse.

BECAUSE YOU ARE SO NICE.

MOTHER: Well, and he did real well. He stayed back where he needed to be. Until [youngest sibling] cried his first cry, I was always....we just didn't know what was going to happen and how [older sibling] would handle that if he wasn't ok. But I would have had those feelings anyway, regardless of whether he'd been there. How did it change it for you?

FATHER: I was trying to think. I don't think a lot because it went so well. I think it helped, if he wanted to, if he was in the wrong spot, or something like that, it would have been real frustrating. I tried to tell him I was going to be by mom and so....but it went real well so he didn't get in the way really.

MOTHER: I think we both worried beforehand, that if it was a long labor like the others had been, he would have been bored we were afraid and I wouldn't have wanted [father] to leave. And if it had been as long as the others had been, you would have been there. So

that would have taken care of that too.

IT WOULD HAVE WORKED OUT EITHER WAY?

MOTHER: Yes!

I'M ALSO CURIOUS HOW YOU WERE TREATED BY THE STAFF AT THE HOSPITAL AND HOW THEY RESPONDED TO ALL OF THIS, THE NURSING STAFF IN PARTICULAR?

FATHER: We had a grumpy nurse. I was surprised.

MOTHER: Yeah, I don't know if she objected to older sibling.

FATHER: Oh! No, I don't think so, I think she was just having a bad day or something. But, ahhh, and I have bad days too so I mean I just accepted it as that's the way it was, you know. Was there another nurse other than her?

MOTHER: Well, they changed shifts....

FATHER: The second nurse was great!

MOTHER: Yes.

FATHER: She was expecting twins herself and she was great, very helpful. I kind of forget about all, like giving the little thing a bath and everything and all, you know. It's good we had her to do that process. Then we had another nurse on checkout. She was really good with the boys. She made that comment, she goes, I really enjoy the older kids. The babies are great and stuff but she interacted with [middle sibling] and [older sibling] well, real well.

MOTHER: She let them get him dressed to go home.

FATHER: Yeah. She just really went out of her way I thought letting them do a lot of the stuff, cause I knew she could've done it quicker and gotten us out of there but she took the time.

MOTHER: She had them right there during the bath showing them what she was doing.

FATHER: Just included them, that was really good. We didn't have that one nurse very long I guess.

MOTHER: I don't know if she....if it had anything to do with [older sibling], it might have, maybe she didn't like having him there but, I'm not sure. And [obstetrician] was fine with it all.

FATHER: And [pediatrician] was fine with it too, he came in.....

CAN YOU THINK OF PARTICULAR THINGS, NOW, YOU MENTIONED SOME OF THE THINGS THEY DID DO WITH THE BOYS. WHAT ABOUT BEFORE THE BIRTH PERHAPS?

FATHER: We didn't have much time before, really, I mean it was fast. Although you did have a hard time. You did ask for some drugs.... she was having a heck of a time.

MOTHER: By the time she got them into me he was almost here, she'd tried both hands and..... Can you think of specific things? Your were more aware than I was, I think.

FATHER: No, I really can't.

MOTHER: I kind of remember them showing [older sibling] where he could sit and put his things, you know.

WHAT COULD NURSES HAVE DONE TO ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE FOR THE FAMILY?

FATHER: Involving everybody was good.

MOTHER: Well, if they had, you know, basically I think the nursing staff was there for me...which, that's where they should be. And with [youngest sibling's] birth, they had their hands full just getting

everything out and ready.

FATHER: I don't know how far to go with what is their responsibility?

THINK WHAT MIGHT HAVE MADE A DIFFERENCE FOR YOU, NOT THAT IT WAS A BAD EXPERIENCE, BUT WHAT MIGHT HAVE MADE A DIFFERENCE.

MOTHER: I think anything that they would have done.

FATHER: I wonder if some of them had bad experiences about siblings or has there been a lot of sibling-attended births around?

NOT IN THIS AREA, I CALLED SEVERAL HOSPITALS TO CHECK THAT AND MAINLY I WAS INTERESTED IN THEIR POLICY, AND THEIR POLICIES ARE VERY OPEN. WHOEVER YOU INVITE TO THE BIRTH MAY ATTEND, IN SOME PLACES. BUT IT HASN'T BEEN DONE A LOT. I HEARD SOME INTERESTING EXPERIENCES BUT NOT A LOT OF NEGATIVE AT ALL. IT WAS JUST NOT A COMMON OCCURRENCE.

FATHER: I can see where if it was a long labor, it would really cause some problems, you know, like if we had to walk around the hall or something, you know, or press on her back, things like that, I think the child would really get bored or antsy. I don't know what would happen.

MOTHER: Well, there was a TV in the room.

FATHER: Yeah, that's true. Maybe some kids videos, cause there's nothing on TV for them to watch. If they could have some classic movies or cartoons or something like that to entertain the kids.

AND THEY PROBABLY WOULD IN PEDIATRICS.

FATHER: Oh, yeah. That's probably right. It's probably not that big of a problem. That would be helpful if it was a long labor.

MOTHER: Well, anything that an adult does, positively, towards your child, I think you appreciate, no matter where you are. And so if they... maybe... just making them somehow feel like they're glad they are there. Or, let me know if there's something I can do for you. I don't know, just anything that isn't negative.

WHAT MIGHT YOU DO DIFFERENTLY SHOULD YOU GIVE BIRTH TO ANOTHER CHILD IN THE FUTURE?

MOTHER: One thing we would do probably is teach [older sibling] how to run the camera. Because, I think, for me, it is great to have the video even though it was all over, but he's embarrassed to have anyone see it and I think if he really wanted to do that. I don't know if [middle sibling] would be mature enough or not.

FATHER: Attention span being a little shorter than [older sibling's].

MOTHER: I think if [middle sibling] were to be there, there would have to be somebody that would be there, an adult there for him. I wonder though if he would feel left out at this point in our lives if he didn't get to go. Other than that, maybe just finding other books. I felt really good about the way it all went, wouldn't be a lot, I would think of. Maybe take something for them to eat, snacks or something.

FATHER: It would be interesting to see if [middle sibling] would want to, cause he may not.

MOTHER: Yeah, and that would be fine.

FATHER: I wonder if he would regret it afterward, not going.

MOTHER: I watched, today, the video again. [Middle sibling] looks so young then. The look on his face when he was holding [youngest sibling], he was in awe.

FATHER: Well, he got down there pretty quick.

MOTHER: But I think him being two years older, he's more at a point of - [older sibling] got to do it and I didn't. I think he would feel more left out. I don't think he felt at all left out at that age, three. I think... I know he was too young. [Older sibling] was seven.

WHAT WERE YOUR OBSERVATIONS REGARDING THE INITIAL MEETING OF SIBLINGS, WE BEEN TALKING ABOUT THIS A LITTLE.

FATHER: I think it was neat that [middle sibling] got to be there so early, you know, he was pretty excited about holding him.

MOTHER: The other day [older sibling] was telling [middle sibling] about remembering seeing him for the first time, and of course he would have just come to the hospital and that was still really exciting for him but I think it was different being there and seeing that little body come out and then [older sibling] was the first one that got to hold him, wasn't he? The first picture we have is [older sibling] holding him. They took him right away and got him all cleaned up so neither one of us got to hold him. Anyway whether it was the first or not it was pretty soon.

FATHER: Time has a lot to do with it too. If it's an afternoon baby, that's why [middle sibling] got to be there right away, but if it's four in the morning, you know, then it's going to be eight or nine before. And I wonder about siblings going through that, what [older sibling] would have done if it was three in the morning, he probably would have fallen asleep on the couch and to try to wake him up is really a job. I don't know. I've come to the conclusion afternoon babies are great.

MOTHER: I think, when I watched the video, I was amazed at how gentle [older sibling] was with him and how he knew exactly, I mean he was carrying him from one person to the next and he was doing it really well, you could see that there was an adult nearby him but he

really did well.

HOW DO YOU FEEL YOUR SON'S BEING PRESENT AT HIS SIBLING'S BIRTH AFFECTED THE ATTACHMENT AND RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEM?

FATHER: It's hard to know if it would be any different or not because [middle sibling] really likes him and he wasn't there.

MOTHER: But [older sibling] is very nurturing, I think he might have been anyway, it's hard to know. But I was thinking today when I asked him to go get [youngest sibling] dressed, and I had already asked him to do several other things, when I did it I thought I don't ever hear him complain when I ask him to something for [youngest sibling]. He complains if he has to do other things but I think there is a real bond there.

FATHER: I think it's hard to know.

MOTHER: Right.

FATHER: And the age too, he's at the age where he is more responsible and can do a lot.

WHAT EFFECT DO YOU THINK THIS EXPERIENCE HAS HAD ON THE FAMILY RELATIONSHIP?

FATHER: I don't remember their response, do you remember their response when we told them [older sibling] was going? Did they know? Did we tell them even?

MOTHER: I'm sure we told them, well, yeah, I'm sure we did. I guess when you first ask, me, I was thinking more of just our family. Well, I think, whenever you have a group of people and you all have the same, you know, remember when we....instead of me saying, well I remember when you were born and this is what it was like. But for [older sibling] he can say, I remember when, and we've all had this shared experience.

YOU WERE THINKING MORE EXTENDED FAMILY, WHAT DID YOU THINK?

FATHER: I think everybody is so used to us doing something different anyway, it's just, I don't think it's that surprising any more.

AND YOU'VE GOT A PRETTY ACCEPTING FAMILY. YOU DO IT AND YOU PULL IT OFF WELL, THAT'S THE NICE THING.

FATHER: So far, I'm sure some of the in-laws thought we were nuts but they don't express it or they are supportive so it's not

ONE OF THE EARLY ARTICLES THAT I FOUND DESCRIBED IT AS BREAKING OF THE SACRED TABOO, AS A WAY THAT SOME FOLK VIEW THIS WHOLE THING. THIS AUTHOR DIDN'T VIEW IT THAT WAY THOUGH.

FATHER: Well if you think back, you know, just the mother went in, the father didn't even get to be there. It's funny how everything is starting to

MOTHER: Well, you'd mentioned that some people would say well you wouldn't have them there at the time of conception, why would you have them there at the time of birth. For me that's totally different. You're right you wouldn't have, ever. I did think watching the video, I realized watching the video that when [middle sibling] and[paternal grandmother] came first. And she had the baby in the video and then it was [middle sibling], you know it was quite a while, I guess they all came from the parking lot, she came up first. I realized watching the video she was the one that got to show everyone the baby. And she was down there with [middle sibling]. I tried to think if we got to do it again is there some way we could do it with just our family first. They got to see him within an hour or so and I don't know. Maybe you got to talk about this with them... my cousin had my aunt come to the birth and I thought..I wonder if my mom feels left out. You know [older sibling] got to go but she didn't get to, but I think I felt, I would have felt a lot

more comfortable with [older sibling] there than I would have.....

THAT IS A REAL PERSONAL DECISION.

MOTHER: Yeah, it is such an exciting thing that....and such a special thing, I think that's why [father] was saying, you know, I'm not sure I even want [older sibling] there. I think we were both real glad that he was there. But for me it isn't something I'd want to share with a room full of people.

ANYTHING ELSE ON FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS?

MOTHER: I really appreciate the fact that none of them are critical of us doing this. That would have taken some of the joy out of it.

I WANT TO INVITE YOU TO SHARE ANY OTHER THINGS THAT YOU THINK WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO US UNDERSTANDING MORE ABOUT THE SITUATION OR THINGS NURSES CAN DO OR HOSPITALS CAN DO TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

FATHER: Maybe if... having, you know, the hospital prepares a nice meal for the mother and father, maybe if siblings are going to be a part of it do a family dinner there in the room for everybody. I know [older sibling] and [middle sibling] and I had to go downstairs to the cafeteria and leave [mother] and [youngest sibling] up in the room, and it's hard to get their food and to have it brought to the room would have been nice. Anything like that where we could have stayed together.

MOTHER: I think probably what you are doing is helping prepare nurses, but I think if a nurse has preconceived notions that it's not going to be a good experience, then she comes at it with that attitude and it is kind of evident. Just like the experiences we have sometimes with people who already have in their mind that home schooling is a bad thing.

I'D LIKE TO FIGURE OUT WAYS TO BROADEN PEOPLE'S

THINKING IN A LOT OF AREAS. THIS IS ONE AND I THINK YOU HAVE MADE A GOOD COMPARISON BETWEEN THE HOME SCHOOLING AND SIBLING ATTENDED BIRTH. PEOPLE DO HAVE STRONG OPINIONS ABOUT THOSE TWO ISSUES IN PARTICULAR.

FATHER: Well, you know, how when we first wanted to have a baby at home, well now I would prefer having it at the hospital the way we do and then just come home rather than to have a home birth, I just feel more comfortable doing it that way. But I'm not going to say it's wrong to have a home birth. That's fine too.

I HAD WONDERED IF YOU HAD REGRETS ABOUT NOT HAVING A HOME BIRTH?

MOTHER: No, but I think the hardest thing about that all was when [a previous doctor], when I first started talking about it and his attitude toward me and how could I even think of such a stupid thing. I mean actually using the word stupid and idiotic. You know, the word, I don't know.

FATHER: I think we changed his thinking a lot, too.

MOTHER: Mmm, yeah.

HE'S COME A LONG WAY.

MOTHER: Yeah, he did.

FATHER: Hospitals have since changed tremendously, you know, and that's why I think it's neat to be able to go to the hospital and have the baby and have the family there and come home.

MOTHER: And for hospitals to be willing....

FATHER: To do that rather than have such strict rules where, you know, just the mother and father and the kids can look through the window....

MOTHER: I really appreciated how easy [obstetrician] was to get along with. When I first ask, I would guess

he doesn't have too many people that go home the same day, I don't know, but when I asked him he just said, well, as long as you stay six hours, I don't care.

IF YOU HAVE MORE TO SHARE I'M WILLING TO LISTEN.
OTHERWISE THANK YOU FOR SHARING THIS EXPERIENCE WITH
ME. I WOULD NEXT LIKE TO MEET WITH THE ENTIRE FAMILY
AT YOUR CONVENIENCE.

APPENDIX D

PATERNAL GRANDPARENTS INTERVIEW

Paternal Grandparent Interview

This interview with paternal grandmother and paternal grandfather of the children in the study, was held in their home and lasted about one half hour.

WELL, FIRST OF ALL, I WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU FOR LETTING ME DO THIS. I REALLY DO APPRECIATE YOUR WILLINGNESS TO SHARE AND I THINK YOU REALLY DO HAVE SOME THINGS TO CONTRIBUTE. I HAVE JUST ABOUT SIX MAIN QUESTIONS TO ASK AND I HOPE YOU WILL FEEL FREE JUST TO ANSWER AS MANY OF THEM AS YOU ARE COMFORTABLE WITH. YOU DON'T HAVE TO ANSWER ANYTHING NECESSARILY BUT A LOT OF IT IS JUST TO HELP NURSES UNDERSTAND HOW TO BETTER CARE FOR PEOPLE. THAT IS KIND OF THE WHOLE OBJECTIVE FOR ME IS TO HELP US KNOW WHAT WE CAN DO AS NURSES TO MAKE OTHER PEOPLES LIVES BETTER, PARTICULARLY IN REGARD TO THE SIBLING-ATTENDED BIRTH THAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT.

THE FIRST QUESTION THAT I'D LIKE TO ASK IS HOW YOU FELT WHEN YOU LEARNED THAT THIS WAS GOING TO OCCUR, THAT YOUR GRANDSON WAS GOING TO ATTEND THE BIRTH OF HIS BABY BROTHER. WHAT WERE YOU FIRST FEELINGS?

GRANDFATHER: I guess I'm kinda from the old school, I didn't think too much of it. I thought it was, I never seen neither one of my children born and I didn't know whether that young of a person would realize what he was watching. Then I was kinda worried about what would happen if there were any problems or difficulties, what about, how would it affect [older sibling] because he'd already been pushed..... a death had been pushed onto him, you know and I didn't.....I didn't know whether it was too wise or not to be right truthful about it all.

AND THAT IS A GENUINE CONCERN

GRANDMOTHER: Well I guess, you know, I had misgivings about it too and thought about what if it was a

difficult labor, what would they do with [older sibling] and how, you know, how could he handle that. Or if something happened, ahh, you know in one sense I thought it would be really a real bonding time. I don't know whether you are going to have this question or not but I thought about [middle sibling], ahhh, they left [middle sibling] out, and even though he was young I felt like that was too bad.

YES, I THINK THAT IS ALWAYS DIFFICULT TO DECIDE WHEN ARE THEY OLD ENOUGH OR HOW DO YOU INVOLVE THE YOUNGER SIBLINGS. IN ALL MY READING I HAVE BEEN PICKING THAT UP, TOO. THAT'S ONE OF THE DILEMMAS.

GRANDMOTHER: Since he was the middle one too, you know, and it's taken him longer to bond than, I think he kinda felt they were all there and he was here with us. I felt that, I questioned the wisdom of that.

HOW DO YOU FEEL YOUR GRANDSON'S BEING PRESENT AT THE BIRTH HAS AFFECTED THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO BROTHERS?

GRANDMOTHER: It really was a real bonding thing with [older sibling], I think that's when I noticed that [middle sibling] had been, more so, that [middle sibling] had been left out, I mean that came to me real quick, because there was some real bonding there, [older sibling] had just, you know, this was his boy, his baby.

GRANDFATHER: I think it bonded his mother and him together more too, [older sibling] and his mom. I think, I mean, from then on seemed like she's been willing to share anything with him. You know, to me, and then like you say [middle sibling] has been left out.

GRANDMOTHER: I think there was a bonding with [older sibling] and his mom.

GRANDFATHER: Yea, I really do, and I don't know how his dad felt about it. I mean I never noticed anything

between his dad and [older sibling] but I've noticed from his mom since then that this very close relationship.

HOW WERE YOU TWO INVOLVED IN THIS PROCESS? YOU SAID [MIDDLE SIBLING] WAS HERE WITH YOU?

GRANDMOTHER: They went... how did that go? The went down...[to the hospital].

GRANDFATHER: In the morning they left [middle sibling] here and they went with [older sibling]....

GRANDMOTHER: I believe [middle sibling] stayed overnight. Or when he woke up because he was on the bed when the phone rang. Or it was really early in the morning. I can't remember exactly but he was here when he woke up..... we have a snapshot, we have pictures of [middle sibling]. We took pictures of [middle sibling] when he heard the news. So he heard right away that he had a baby brother and we've got pictures of him.

GRANDFATHER: He was born at daytime wasn't he? About one o'clock or something like that.

GRANDMOTHER: But he'd been asleep maybe he was napping.

AND HOW WERE YOU INVOLVED?

GRANDMOTHER: We had [middle sibling].

DID YOU TAKE HIM DOWN TO THE HOSPITAL?

GRANDMOTHER: We took him down immediately. We called, they called us first just because [middle sibling] was here and then I called [maternal grandmother] or I'm sure they called her too but then I called and asked if she'd like to ride down with us. And so she rode down with us..... didn't she?

GRANDFATHER: I don't really know.

GRANDMOTHER: Somehow [maternal grandfather] was gone but she rode down.... we asked if she'd like to go with us and she went too, then. So we all got to go in and [middle sibling] got to hold the baby then, right away and of course they were in that big room. We all took pictures and had pictures taken with the baby.

TELL ME MORE ABOUT THAT, HOW THE FAMILY INTERACTED.

GRANDMOTHER: Well, of course her mother, you know, we all went over and hugged her but of course there was that, you know with the mother and daughter it's close there and of course she was, I remember her seeing her going over to her and I thought about when I was over at [paternal aunt's], that was the same way, you know, to go and give her a hug it was a maternal thing and it was just a real joyous time. Of course [youngest sibling] was right there in the room with us too, it was a large room and there was a large chair and we all could sit in the chair and hold the baby and get our pictures taken. [middle sibling] was on the bed with his mom a lot, I think he missed his mom. That was important that he got up on the bed.

DO YOU REMEMBER OTHER THINGS?

GRANDFATHER: Just that [older sibling] was saying he got to take the movie ...video of when it was coming. And I asked him if he was nervous and he said no, I remember that.

GRANDMOTHER: And I can remember my feeling then at the time when he said he took the movie, you know, I thought here's this little boy, little eight years old child taking a movie, you know, of his mother having a baby, that's not a comfortable feeling, it wasn't for me.

GRANDFATHER: I think it's making him grown up too fast, myself. Really put a responsibility onto him, you know.

GRANDMOTHER: Well, he's wiser, you know, because he's

experienced something his peers haven't. He's mature for his age and I'm sure that has had something to do with his maturing real fast, quicker. But it was a real happy, happy time.

HOW ABOUT YOUR SON, [FATHER], IN ALL THIS?

GRANDMOTHER: Oh, I guess that's where I came in, you know, just hugging him and we were, I don't know, he was just standing by, you know, just there beside [mother], when we walked in she had [youngest sibling] in her arms and [father] was there by the bed and [older sibling] was there. He was just beaming too. I think he was pretty calm all through it. Very gentle, so gentle.

WHAT EFFECT DO YOU THINK THIS EXPERIENCE HAS HAD ON THE FAMILY RELATIONSHIP?

GRANDFATHER: I think it has let [father] share more with us. He's been more willing to share with us certain things. I mean he, I don't know whether he would have done it otherwise but he does it, he might of just be something that he does, you know, normally, I mean he's.....

GRANDMOTHER: Our families are so closely interrelated it's hard to tell if that one incident has made the difference, you know, cause I thought, you know, [father], we're really very close. [mother] is more of a private person and she's a...of course more comfortable with her family but, you know, there's no problem as far as we know there's just a freedom I think with the family. I don't know if that one incident has made a difference.

GRANDFATHER: I wouldn't say it had and I wouldn't say it hadn't.

GRANDMOTHER: One thing, I just happened to think, I have been observing though, lately, just the last ahh.....well we when [middle sibling], you know, here he was this middle one, [older sibling] and [youngest

sibling] were, they were all kind of here, so we really made a point to make [middle sibling] the focus of our attention and I've noticed when sometimes when they'll come in and we'll make over [middle sibling] first and [youngest sibling] will kind of stand and look as if.. well I'm the baby, you know, I mean, and he's the one but we make over [middle sibling] first, and I've notice now that [middle sibling] and [youngest sibling] are drawing together. I think [older sibling] is taking on more the role of a big brother caring, the caring and [youngest sibling] and [middle sibling] are playing together and I noticed this wasn't going on before. [middle sibling] was a little more, he wasn't happy, there's many times he'd said to me..I wish I was the baby, you know, he was feeling left out, he was not happy with where he was at and that's why we would do that. I notice last night he was sitting, they were sitting here playing monopoly with [paternal grandfather] and [youngest sibling] came up and [middle sibling] would take his hand and go like this under his little chin and talk to him and then he'd go on and play. He wouldn't do that a few months ago, he was more, he showed more resentment or anger but now [youngest sibling] asks for him now, he wants [middle sibling] now, he asks for him, so there is a bonding taking place with [middle sibling] and [youngest sibling]. I've been really thrilled to see that. And it's not leaving [older sibling] out, he has that role of being more the caretaker and feeling more included.

INTERESTING THAT YOU WOULD PICK THAT UP AND ADDRESS
[MIDDLE SIBLING]'S NEED.

GRANDMOTHER: [middle sibling] is coming into his own more so, now. Maybe you have noticed at church when he sits with us. [middle sibling] will be sure to sit with us. He knows how we made special effort to make him realize how, we tell him how wonderful he is, what a winner he is.

HOW FORTUNATE HE IS TO HAVE GRANDPARENTS WHO WILL DO
THAT.

GRANDMOTHER: He has two sets that will do that.

(*TELEPHONE INTERRUPTION)

WHAT WOULD YOU SUGGEST TO NURSES THAT MIGHT FACILITATE FAMILY INVOLVEMENT IN BIRTH, THAT MIGHT BE HELPFUL FOR GRANDPARENTS OR FAMILIES IN GENERAL. DID YOU NOTICE ANYTHING THE NURSES DID OR WERE THERE THINGS THEY COULD HAVE DONE THAT MIGHT HAVE HELPED.

GRANDFATHER: I don't even remember the nurse being in the room, do you?

GRANDMOTHER: No, I don't either.

GRANDFATHER: It seems to me like she came in and took [mother]'s blood pressure and stuff after we were in there a while but I don't remember a nurse being in there.....and then I think they came and got the baby before we left too, no they didn't. When we left [middle sibling] got to stay and they all came home together.

GRANDMOTHER: Because they came home in three or four hours after [youngest sibling] was born. All I can think about is the way the nurses were when we were in Des Moines with [deceased sibling]. But that's not a birth. I suppose if something would happen, if there was grieving, if the baby wasn't functioning, something was going on, you know, then there is interaction. There would have to be, I would think the nurses then would want to be very sensitive to.. not just to the parents or to that baby, but to the grandparents, those that would be there and that they would be.. ahh.. not make you feel like well you were just an extra but to really be sensitive to your feelings and to be very kind and to reach out and touch and let them know that they are doing all they can for that baby and they'll keep you informed and show you were you can wait and just to be sensitive to the grandparents that would be there. But as far as just the family being there, there wasn't any involvement with the nurses and I don't know what they would have

done in there cause it was just such a family affair.

GRANDFATHER: Then we didn't get there until at least an hour and a half after it was born, you know, if we had been there quicker it might have been different, the nurses might have been there. I agree.

GRANDMOTHER: There really wasn't any reason for the nurses to be in there, they would have been an extra almost.

GRANDFATHER: That's the only thing I remember is the nurse coming in to check the blood pressure and pulse and then she left right away. She checked on the baby too then she left.

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN INVOLVED IN GRANDPARENT CLASSES?

GRANDMOTHER: Indicated she had not by shaking head.

THIS IS SOMETHING THAT HAS COME UP RECENTLY BECAUSE OF ALL THE CHANGES IN BIRTH, THESE CLASSES ARE OFFERED TO EXPLAIN HOW THINGS ARE DEALT WITH DIFFERENTLY, THE PROCESS. SOMETIMES A GOOD IDEA.

GRANDFATHER: Especially for the grandparents that aren't close. There are some grandparents that don't get to see them for a long time, really, you know.

GRANDMOTHER: Then sometimes the grandparents end up doing a lot of the parenting. You would feel like you are part of that child, too. After taking a class you're involved. Anything like that that involves you makes you, makes that a, you know, more yours, you owned it.

ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO TELL ME THAT WOULD HELP GRANDPARENTS FEEL MORE INVOLVED IN THE WHOLE PROCESS, ESPECIALLY WHEN A SIBLING WAS INVOLVED. WOULD IT HAVE HELPED YOU TO HAVE SOME LITERATURE OR PREPARATION AHEAD OF TIME TO KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT?

GRANDMOTHER: Yeah, I think maybe if we had had, you

know, it was just kind of dropped on us out of the blue, [older sibling] was going to be going and I think maybe if we had had some of these classes or you know our feelings would have been different probably we could have felt more positive about it. It's really foreign to people in our generation to have that. I think that would be good. Just the education part of it letting the grandparents know. And you know, maybe, perhaps letting the daughter, having the daughter-in-law or son-in-law and son and daughter-in-law, have them understand, help them to understand the grandparents involvement in this, you don't realize, you don't have any realization as a parent what it means to grandparents to have a grandchild. And for them to understand it. I would think that might help relationships between those two generations if the parents understood how precious that grandchild is.

SO YOU THINK THAT WOULD IMPROVE FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS?

GRANDMOTHER: I think that would do something for it because we don't have that, I just happened to think about it, because [mother] is always so generous to let us have the boys when ever we want them, and I've thought so many times how kind it is of her not to resent us giving the boys all this attention or even having them sit with us in church. I don't think she resents it, she doesn't act like she does and I think that's really being kind. But not all daughter-in-laws would feel that way or sons-in-laws, either way.

I THINK YOU FOLKS HAVE SUCH A UNIQUE RELATIONSHIP, BEAUTIFUL RELATIONSHIP, FROM MY VANTAGE POINT OBSERVING YOUR FAMILIES. I THINK IT IS SO SPECIAL ALREADY, BUT YOU CAN ALWAYS DO THINGS TO ENHANCE. I HAVE A REAL CONCERN ABOUT FAMILIES AND ANYTHING WE CAN DO TO MAKE IT MORE POSITIVE FOR FAMILIES. I'M LOOKING AT THE NURSES ROLE AND WHAT CAN NURSES DO TO REALLY MAKE THE BIRTH EXPERIENCE BETTER.

GRANDMOTHER: I think the nurse could make the difference with that in this situation with the mother

and the grandparent.

GRANDFATHER: You bet.

GRANDMOTHER: It's good for grandparents to think about the parent too. We are fortunate that [mother] doesn't resent us having the boys.

AND SHE IS FORTUNATE TO HAVE THAT PRIVILEGE TOO.

GRANDMOTHER: That's the one thing about our other kids, I wouldn't say they resent it, but they all feel a little bit jealous because when they come here those boys come in, this is home to them. They feel like their kids have missed out.

GRANDFATHER: I never had grandparents very close, so I don't know what it's like to be around grandparents.

GRANDMOTHER: My grandparents were just right next to us and I would go over and I can remember a few things, mother never cared if we went over, she was glad to have us go but grandma would always give me stuff, you know, I'd come home with all this stuff grandma didn't want. My grandparents were about a block from us and so I spent a lot of time with them but they weren't like us, you know, grandmother was sitting there crocheting most of the time, not playing games with us and grandpa was out digging potatoes or something. So it has changed immensely, the relationships.

I DON'T KNOW THAT MANY CHILDREN HAVE THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT THESE BOYS DO. TO HAVE GRANDPARENTS SO CLOSE AND SPECIAL AS WELL.

GRANDMOTHER: We're fortunate, you know, there's problems, but you may not see them from the outside. There's always little things, but we're all mature enough and it's ok. We are fortunate to have [maternal grandfather] and [maternal grandmother] on the other side. They sure love [father] and that's wonderful.

YOU'RE A NEAT FAMILY. THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR SHARING

WITH ME.

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APPENDIX E
MATERNAL GRANDPARENTS INTERVIEW

Maternal Grandparent Interview

This interview with [maternal grandmother] and [maternal grandfather], the maternal grandparents of the siblings in the study, was held in their home and was one half hour in length.

I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR PERMITTING ME TO INTERVIEW YOU AND FOR LETTING ME BE A PART OF THIS WHOLE SPECIAL EXPERIENCE. THE FIRST QUESTION I HAVE IS MAINLY JUST HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE OF YOUR GRANDSON BEING INVOLVED IN THE BIRTH OF HIS BABY BROTHER?

GRANDMOTHER: Well, I had some hesitations about it. I knew he was quite a mature seven year old but still seven seemed pretty young and I guess I kind of looked back on my own deliveries and thought, boy, I wouldn't want anybody in the room other than the doctor and my husband, and yet I had confidence than [father] and [mother] had done all the reading and all the preparation that needed to be done so there was no way I would have questioned it verbally.

GRANDFATHER: My comments, I guess, would be that I would echo what [maternal grandmother] said, I think [older sibling] is a pretty mature young man for his seven years and the other thing is that being a farmer, births are very common, almost daily, not always daily but it is so common, such an every day experience that it probably didn't phase me much.

GRANDMOTHER: I didn't know whether he had seen his mother naked and things like that. I just am very modest and quite private about a lot of things and so I had some questions but I can see that it meant a lot to him after it was all said and done.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT SIBLINGS BEING PRESENT AT BIRTH IN GENERAL? HAD YOU THOUGHT ABOUT THAT BEFORE OR HAD A PARTICULAR OPINION ABOUT THAT?

GRANDMOTHER: I had never thought about it until [mother] said they were considering letting [older sibling] be a part of it.

GRANDFATHER: I think each kid's different. I'm not sure that at seven years old [middle sibling] would be ready for something like that. I think [older sibling] is more mature and has been more mature. I don't know exactly why but than a lot of seven year olds. He's had a lot of experiences, [father] and [mother] have gone out of their way to give him experiences that a lot of kids don't have.

GRANDMOTHER: He has many of the characteristics of a typical first child. Even though he wasn't their first child they have treated him pretty much as such and given him a lot more responsibility than you ordinarily expect of younger children.

THAT'S A GOOD POINT.

GRANDFATHER: Just a couple days ago he took care of four kids when you (indicating grandmother) weren't feeling too well.

GRANDMOTHER: He took care of me too.

GRANDFATHER: He's a pretty mature boy.

HOW DO YOU FEEL HIS BEING PRESENT AT THE BIRTH AFFECTED THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE FAMILY IN GENERAL?

GRANDMOTHER: Well he has talked so many times about what an awesome experience it was. I am sure that he greatly appreciates the fact that his folks had enough confidence in him and included him. Probably none of the other boys will ever have that opportunity and I don't know that there would be any jealousy or anything and I don't know that there is any special bond now between him and [youngest sibling] that isn't evident also between him and [middle sibling] so I don't know if that made any difference.

GRANDFATHER: The fact that he has been home schooled I think has...just through that experience he's closer to his mom than most kids would be. And [father] gets a lot of...I think he's close to both of his parents. [middle sibling] has always been a Daddy's boy but I think that the home schooling thing has meant that they have hours and hours together each day and there's a lot of kids that don't have very many quality minutes with their parents. So I think that's a plus too. The fact that he seems to be pretty highly motivated and [mother] likes to challenge him and we often get to see his school work and it's very very well done. A lot of kids are not proud when they get an A, boys especially, but he seems to just thrive on it.

GRANDMOTHER: I think one of the things we mean by doing very well is we couldn't answer very many of.. some of... the questions ourselves.

DO YOU THINK HIS ATTENDING HIS BROTHER'S BIRTH MADE ANY DIFFERENCE IN THE RELATIONSHIP THAT YOU HAVE WITH HIM OR ANY OF THE BOYS?

GRANDMOTHER: Oh, I don't think so.

GRANDFATHER: I wouldn't see any. We're just so lucky that they are so close by and basically spend one evening a week here anyway. Plus we go to college basketball games together another night a week so we spend a lot of time with all our grandchildren.

THAT IS SO SPECIAL. WHEN I TALKED TO MY PROFESSOR ABOUT THE IDEA, SHE SAID THIS SOUNDS LIKE SUCH A UNIQUE FAMILY. AND THAT'S THE IDEA FOR CASE STUDY, A UNIQUE SITUATION. WHILE WE CAN'T GENERALIZE THIS FOR ALL FAMILIES IT CAN HELP NURSES UNDERSTAND THAT THERE ARE UNIQUE FAMILIES THAT CAN DEAL WITH THIS TYPE OF THING.

GRANDMOTHER: The thought just occurred to me, and it isn't connected with that question necessarily, that [mother] tended to be afraid of new experiences as she was growing up and I'm wondering if that has made her

more determined that she's is going to help [older sibling] get involved in a lot of things and not be afraid of them. I don't know whether that's got anything to do with it or not. She won 4-H trips to Chicago and wouldn't go and different things she was scared to branch out.

GRANDFATHER: I never thought about that. She had that bad experience when she was in seventh grade when she had that heart surgery and it was on an elevator and the elevator got stalled. So she will never ride on an elevator. It's just something that happened to her and it made such an impression.

GRANDMOTHER: We didn't, I never heard this until about, within the last month. She has claustrophobia about a lot of things. But I know that she just shakes her head at all the things [older sibling] wants to do, travel and all the rest because not in her wildest dreams would she have done all those things.

GRANDFATHER: Well, I think she and [father] are a good mesh in that [father] is very outgoing and very new experience oriented. They are a great team.

I NEED TO BACK TRACK A LITTLE. I WANTED TO SEE HOW YOU WERE INVOLVED IN THE BIRTH? DID YOU HAVE A PART IN THIS? DID YOU GO DOWN TO THE HOSPITAL?

GRANDMOTHER: No. We went after the birth had taken place. In fact it wasn't until that morning that I knew for sure that he was going to be involved. They were up at the church that morning. In fact he had drawn pictures of where he was sitting when his mother told him they were going to leave for the hospital just as soon as he presented his part of the program.

GRANDFATHER: So, no, we had nothing to do with it really.

DID YOU GO DOWN TO THE HOSPITAL?

GRANDMOTHER: Oh, yes, we all went. Grandpa went down,

we had a room full of people.

TELL ME ABOUT THAT.

GRANDFATHER: It was tax day, April 15.

GRANDMOTHER: And he was born shortly after one, one thirty, something like that and we went down. We had Dad with us.

SO YOU ACTUALLY HAD FOUR GENERATIONS? I MAY NEED TO INTERVIEW YOUR DAD.

GRANDMOTHER: Yes, we had four generations there, but I don't think he could remember anything from then. [paternal grandfather] and [paternal grandmother] were there. They must of had [middle sibling] with them. After we all saw the baby, then they took [middle sibling] to get the baby a gift, [older sibling] and [middle sibling].

WHAT STANDS OUT IN YOUR MIND ABOUT THAT? I'M WONDERING IF NURSES WERE AT ALL INVOLVED.

GRANDMOTHER: Oh, yes, yes, very, yes. [mother] said the nurse..., and she was so pleased with the doctor. Now this was the first time she'd had this particular doctor because she had been in Eldora with the others. And she was so thrilled with the way he responded and helped and so forth. And it didn't take very long that time either, which helped a lot. And I can remember, I don't know.... that was our first experience in a big birthing room where there was room for all three generations and both sides of the family. We had a lot of freedom.

QUITE A BIG CONTRAST TO LOOKING IN THE WINDOW?

GRANDMOTHER: Oh, yes, I'll say. We were able to take lots of pictures with everybody holding him.

GRANDFATHER: I don't know, my comments really didn't..... with [another grandchild] being born we all

trucked down there.

GRANDMOTHER: Oh, my. Then there was my sister and her friend and everybody else too.

GRANDFATHER: Births are a big event in our family!

GRANDMOTHER: Fortunately they've all gone well.

GRANDFATHER: Yes, thank goodness.

MY LAST QUESTION ALSO INVOLVES NURSES. WHAT WOULD YOU SUGGEST THAT NURSES MIGHT DO TO FACILITATE THE FAMILY BEING INVOLVED?

GRANDMOTHER: Apparently they were excellent with [older sibling]. I think [mother] had some concerns that she did not want him in the room during hard labor and if any thing had gone wrong she wanted a way for him to be taken out of there yet at the same time she wanted [father] in there and I don't know exactly what arrangement they had but I think the nurses must have played a part there. Because by the time we got down there he knew he could go down to the refrigerator and get juice, this was all a big, big deal to him and so apparently part of the time he was out of the room and I'm not sure whether [father] was with him or whether a nurse was or what, you'll have to ask them about that but that was another of my concerns was....labor can be so hard some times and I was concerned that he not be frightened by it all. So I don't know what part the nurses did play, because we weren't there until it was all over.

GRANDFATHER: Well, making him feel as at ease as possible, comfortable. They're in charge and they call the shots so they.....

GRANDMOTHER: There was some special bond that developed just during the labor, I think, with this particular nurse. Whether, it seems to me she had just had twins or was expecting twins, or something, I mean she was close enough to the situation that she knew

exactly what [mother] was going through and I remember her saying that she was just wonderful.

ANYTHING ELSE THAT YOU WANT TO SHARE ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE OR HOW IT HAS AFFECT YOUR FAMILY RELATIONSHIP?

GRANDMOTHER: I don't feel any different because of it. I think [father] and [mother] were wise in giving [older sibling] the responsibility to take the video. I mean he got mostly floor, he didn't really actually get a good video but at least he was doing something and it was occupying him and keeping his attention.

GRANDFATHER: I guess only that I think every individual case must be different and every kid would be different and the majority of kids at seven years old I don't think would be mature enough in the first place.

GRANDMOTHER: I think it's an experience he'll never forget.

I THANK YOU FOR SHARING YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH ME.

APPENDIX F
SIBLING INTERVIEWS

First Sibling Interview

This first scheduled interview with the sibling, [older sibling], took place in his home and lasted about one half hour.

THANK YOU FOR LETTING ME DO THIS INTERVIEW. I AM REALLY INTERESTED IN WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY AND WANT YOU TO FEEL FREE TO SAY WHATEVER YOU WANT. TELL ME ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE, JUST HOW IT ALL HAPPENED, THIS EXPERIENCE YOU HAD WITH THE BIRTH OF YOUR BABY BROTHER.

Well, I had stayed at a friend's house and we had a program at the church and when they came back they said that they were going to the hospital to have the baby. So as soon as we got done with the program we went straight to the hospital, and it came about three hours later.

OK. WHAT DID YOU THINK ABOUT THAT?

It was pretty cool.

WHEN DID YOU FIND OUT YOU WERE GOING TO BE A BIG BROTHER AGAIN?

I can't remember.

WHAT DID YOUR MOM AND DAD HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THAT?

Mmmm. I don't know. Let's see. They just told me I was gonna have a, it was ah, a new baby.

THEY DIDN'T KNOW IF IT WAS GOING TO BE A BOY OR GIRL AT THAT POINT, HUH?

Yea.

CAN YOU REMEMBER ANY OF THE THINGS THEY DID TO HELP YOU GET READY FOR THAT?

We watched videos and read a lot of books.

DO YOU REMEMBER A SPECIAL BOOK OR ANY PARTICULAR ONE?

Mmm. No.

DID YOU HAVE LOTS OF QUESTIONS?

Not that I remember.

WELL, HOW DID YOU FIND OUT THAT YOU WERE GOING TO BE THERE WHEN THE BABY WAS BORN?

Mmm. I guess...they ask me if I wanted to go and I said, sure.

WHAT PART OF THE BIRTH STANDS OUT IN YOUR MEMORY THE MOST?

Probably when you could see his little head.

WHAT DID THE NURSES DO AT THAT TIME TO HELP YOU? CAN YOU REMEMBER ANYTHING THE NURSES DID FOR YOU OR SAID TO YOU?

No, not really.

SO, WHAT ELSE DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT IT, HIS LITTLE HEAD WAS BORN AND THEN?

We tried to pick out the name.

WHO PICKED OUT THE NAME?

Well, mom and dad had two choices and I kinda picked the choice.

AHHH, SO YOU GOT TO NAME THIS BABY?

Mumhuh, they had [another name] and [youngest sibling's name] and I did not like [another name].

I CAN'T IMAGINE HIM AS [another name] NOW EITHER, HE'S

A [youngest sibling].

Then we called the grandparents.

THAT'S PRETTY SPECIAL GETTING TO SHARE ALL THE GOOD NEWS.

Yeah.

WELL, I KNOW YOU WROTE A BOOK, BECAUSE I'VE READ YOUR BOOK. HOW DID THAT START?

Well, for school we had a unit on books. And my aunt had gotten this kit for me for Christmas, where they publish a book and so we wrote the book and I had this whole list of things and I picked that one.

PRETTY NEAT. HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT ABOUT PUBLISHING THAT SO OTHER PEOPLE COULD BUY ONE?

Mmmmm.....

THAT'S YOUR OWN SPECIAL BOOK, HUH?

Unhuh.....

WHAT WOULD YOU SUGGEST THAT MIGHT HELP OTHER CHILDREN BE INVOLVED A BIRTH? I'M INTERESTED IN FINDING OUT HOW WE CAN MAKE THIS HAPPEN WHEN A FAMILY WANTS IT. WHAT CAN WE DO TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE?

Guess get 'em really prepared, like if they take pictures or something.....

SO YOU THINK PREPARATION IS PRETTY IMPORTANT.

Yeah.

LIKE WHAT?

Mmmmm....reading lots of books and stuff.

LIKE THE THINGS YOUR MOM AND DAD DID WITH YOU?

Yeah. Unhuh.

WHAT ELSE, AT THE HOSPITAL?

OK, when you kinda try to stay out of peoples way and stuff.

DO YOU THINK IT WOULD HELP IF YOU HAD A NURSE THAT COULD SPEND TIME WITH YOU?

Might help.

HAVE YOU EVER HEARD ANY OTHER KIDS TALK ABOUT BEING THERE WHEN THEIR BABY BROTHER OR SISTER WERE BORN?

No.

WHAT MIGHT NURSES DO TO HELP CHILDREN WHO COME TO THE HOSPITAL PARTICIPATE IN THE BIRTH.

Just try to, like, help the kids out,... to feel at home.

WOULD VIDEOS OR GAMES HELP?

Unhuh.

DID THEY SHOW YOU WAYS YOU COULD HELP YOUR MOM?

No, not really.

DID YOU GET DRINKS FOR YOUR MOM?

Mmmm, they usually brought in a tray and stuff.

HOW DO YOU FEEL YOUR RELATIONSHIP IS WITH [youngest sibling] NOW?

Pretty good.

DO YOU THINK IT MADE A DIFFERENCE THAT YOU WERE THERE?

It might have. Yeah.

DO YOU THINK IT IS DIFFERENT THAN WHAT MOST KIDS HAVE
WITH THEIR BABY BROTHERS?

Mmmmm.... Yeah.

IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO TELL ME?

I don't think so.

I THINK OUR TIME IS OVER TODAY, THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR
SHARING WITH ME.

Second Sibling Interview

This second interview with the sibling, [older sibling], was held in his home and lasted about fifteen minutes.

I REALIZED AFTER OUR LAST INTERVIEW THAT WE DIDN'T TALK MUCH ABOUT THE FEELINGS YOU HAD WHEN YOUR BABY BROTHER WAS BORN. COULD YOU DESCRIBE HOW YOU FELT WHEN YOU FIRST FOUND OUT YOU WERE GOING TO HAVE A NEW BABY IN THE FAMILY?

Ahh, surprised and puzzled. I felt really weird inside. Excited and happy.

HOW DID IT FEEL SEEING YOUR MOM IN LABOR? HOW WAS THAT FOR YOU?

Excited and scary. Surprised.

WAS THAT HARD?

Umm, it just felt good inside cause you're gonna, you got to see the baby be born and.....

YOUR MOM DIDN'T HAVE A LONG LONG LABOR...

No.

SO YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT HER FOR A LONG TIME.

Yeah.

SOMETIMES WE WONDER IF THAT IS HARD FOR KIDS AND THEY WORRY ABOUT HOW THEIR MOMS ARE GETTING ALONG.

Yeah, cause the rest of theirs were more like overnight deals and so.....

WHAT WERE YOUR FIRST FEELINGS WHEN YOU SAW YOUR BABY BROTHER BORN?

Umm, excited, real excited. Ohhh, really surprised.
It was fun to get to see it. Proud.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE WHOLE EXPERIENCE NOW?

It was a good experience, only one out of ten kids get
to do it and I got to do it so.....

THAT WAS PRETTY SPECIAL?

Umhum.

AS YOU THINK ABOUT IT WOULD YOU DO ANYTHING DIFFERENT
IF YOU GOT TO DO IT AGAIN?

Practice my (video)taping beforehand. Oh, I don't
know. I guess once you've done it you've kinda got the
experience so..... I'd say rest up if it's gonna be
a long time. Of course you never know when she's gonna
have it so that's pretty hard, but, mmmmm.... I guess
just get prepared a little more and things like that.

WOULD YOU DO IT AGAIN?

Yeah! Definitely.

THANKS, THAT HELPS TO FILL IN SOME OF THE GAPS.

APPENDIX G
FAMILY INTERVIEW

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Family Interview

This interview includes the three children, the parents, maternal and paternal grandparents. The setting was the fireside room at a local church. Cookies, milk, hot and cold cider were offered to the participants. Comfortable chairs, a sofa and a child's size rocking chair were arranged in a circle to facilitate interaction among family members.

The parents sat on the sofa, grandparents were separate and evenly spaced around the circle. Older sibling (age 9 years and 8 months at time of interview) sat in a large chair throughout the interview. Middle sibling (3 years and 4 months) went directly to paternal grandmother and sat on her lap for a time then on the floor and moved around the room. Youngest sibling (1 year and 11 months) moved around the circle greeting and smiling at various family members and interviewer. Throughout the session the two younger children played with each other or moved about, apparently happy in this group. No squabbles or disputes were evident during the hour the interview lasted. Toys were available for the children and were played with on several occasions.

The middle child was invited to sign the consent form and readily wrote his name. Paternal grandmother, sitting nearby commented with pride, that he had written in cursive.

The youngest child noticed that both grandfathers were present and looked from one to the other saying "Bompah" "Bompah". Both older siblings heard this and asked him how many grandpas he had.

THANK YOU ALL, ESPECIALLY THE SIBLINGS FOR COMING THIS TIME. I'VE DONE ALL THESE INTERVIEWS AND NOT HAD A CHANCE TO EVEN TALK TO THE YOUNGER TWO SIBLINGS SO I'M GLAD THEY ARE HERE TONIGHT. YOU BOYS ARE SPECIAL TO ME, I WAS THERE AS THE NURSE WHEN THE OLDER TWO WERE BORN. I MISSED THE LAST BIRTH BUT HIS OLDER BROTHER WAS THERE AND THAT IS WHAT WE WILL TALK ABOUT TONIGHT. I BROUGHT WITH ME COPIES OF THE PURPOSE OF MY STUDY AND THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS THAT WE WILL DISCUSS. TONIGHT

IS OUR LAST PLANNED INTERVIEW. THE PURPOSE OF MY STUDY IS TO LOOK AT HOW SIBLING PARTICIPATION IN BIRTH AFFECTS THE RELATIONSHIPS OF THE FAMILY, THE SIBLINGS RELATIONSHIPS AND ATTACHMENT. SPECIFICALLY THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY IS TO EXAMINE THE RESPONSES OF YOUR FAMILY TO THE PRESENCE OF THE OLDEST SIBLING AT THE BIRTH OF THE YOUNGEST. I HOPE YOU WILL FEEL FREE TO RESPOND. WHAT THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, PERCEPTIONS DO YOU HAVE REGARDING THE EXPERIENCE OF A SIBLING-ATTENDED BIRTH?

A quiet pause followed

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THAT? (Question was directed to middle sibling)

MOTHER: Do you remember? What do you think about coming, well, after he was born?

FATHER: Was that pretty exciting?

MIDDLE SIBLING: Yeah!

DO YOU REMEMBER GOING DOWN TO THE HOSPITAL?

MIDDLE SIBLING: Yeah.

HOW OLD WERE YOU THEN?

MIDDLE SIBLING: Four, I think.

MOTHER: What do you remember about it?

MIDDLE SIBLING: Holding him (smiling).

THAT'S PRETTY SPECIAL HOLDING A BRAND NEW BABY, ISN'T IT?

MATERNAL GRANDFATHER: Did you want a sister or a brother?

MIDDLE SIBLING: A brother.

SO YOU GOT WHAT YOU WANTED?

MIDDLE SIBLING: Nodded

PATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: Do you remember seeing your mom in bed with the baby and you crawling up on the bed?

MIDDLE SIBLING: Yeah, unhuh.

PATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: I think you did.

PATERNAL GRANDFATHER: Did that seem like a long time ago?

MIDDLE SIBLING: Yeah.

MOTHER: When I think about the experience I don't think of anything that wasn't positive about it. Having the oldest child there and then having the middle child come....and I appreciated the fact that the rest of the family didn't think that was a very stupid thing to do. Oh, brother, here they go again doing something different.

MATERNAL GRANDFATHER: I don't remember that we really had a vote in it. (Most everyone laughs)

MOTHER: Well, people have their say, even if they don't, they have an opinion.

MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: And I think because they have, it's given freedom to other people to do..... It wasn't until the first grandchild's funeral that we started seeing pictures and displays and so forth and now more and more people are doing this. And yesterday we were down to see our niece.

PATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: Oh! Did she have her baby?

MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: Yes, a boy! And she was saying, at least I think she was saying, had she been confident of how she would perform she would have wanted her oldest daughter there. So I think it's opened other people's ideas and thoughts.

MOTHER: I think beforehand that was one of our concerns was what if the situation didn't turn out very well. Now I think having done it once that even if it didn't it would still be a bonding family situation.

WE SHELTER CHILDREN PERHAPS TOO MUCH IN OUR SOCIETY? WHAT IS IMAGINED IS SOMETIMES FAR WORSE THAN REALITY. ANY OTHER THOUGHTS OR FEELINGS? HOW DO YOU SEE A SIBLING ATTENDED BIRTH AS DIFFERENT FROM A BIRTH WHEN SIBLINGS AREN'T THERE?

MOTHER: For the child.....to have him go from being something to a baby that comes out and is all, you know, the way they look as soon as they are born. it's a whole different thing than coming to a hospital and seeing this little one wrapped up in a blanket.....going and seeing the process.

MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: You'd probably seen baby pigs being born before that hadn't you, so yeah, a little notion there of what.....

MATERNAL GRANDFATHER: Llamas, did you see any llamas being born?

OLDEST SIBLING: (nodding) One, hard to do it but....

MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: Well, one difference would be you would prepare the child differently than if you were just bringing it home and undoubtedly you did a great deal in that area.

FATHER: It's also different for a parent not only are you there for your wife but you're also there for the sibling.

PATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: It becomes just a real connectedness doesn't it? The whole....there's just a connecting, you know, bond all the way through the family this way. I think it's a beautiful thing, you know, to have happen.

MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: It certainly put extra ~~out~~ responsibility on [father], to meet the needs of both of them and especially had something gone wrong. He would've had a tremendous burden to meet the needs of both of them.

THAT'S A GOOD POINT AND AN AREA NURSES CAN PERHAPS HELP FILL IN THE GAPS. MOST OF THE LITERATURE SUGGESTS HAVING A PERSON SPECIFICALLY FOR THE CHILD, AND I WAS SUPPOSE TO HAVE BEEN THAT PERSON

PATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: It wasn't that many years ago they didn't even let the fathers in and how you were just like in a separate world and this was just you and that baby's little thing. They weren't even a part of this and how it's just opened this up and it's made it more a family thing. It is really sad what the father missed out on, now even they are allowing the siblings.

I THINK ONE OF THE MOST PROFOUND THINGS I FOUND IN MY READING WAS REALLY SO OBVIOUS. THE SIBLING RELATIONSHIP IS THE LONGEST RELATIONSHIP YOU HAVE IN LIFE AND ANYTHING YOU CAN DO TO PROMOTE IT OR MAKE IT POSITIVE MAKES A LOT OF SENSE TO ME. I DON'T REMEMBER A LOT OF EMPHASIS BEING PLACED ON THIS OR MUCH CONCERN ABOUT SIBLING RELATIONSHIPS.

MATERNAL GRANDFATHER: There are lots of families that wouldn't even tackle this.

MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: It would usually be indicative of the bond that was already within families to consider including the child.

HOW DO YOU SEE THE EFFECTS OF THIS EXPERIENCE ON THE ATTACHMENT BETWEEN THE SIBLINGS? WHAT SORT OF THINGS DO YOU SEE THAT PERHAPS THE WHOLE EVENT MIGHT HAVE AFFECTED?

MATERNAL GRANDFATHER: Can you say they never fight?

MOTHER: No but the oldest is very nurturing to the

youngest, he takes good care of him, he looks out for him. And if he isn't home the youngest wants to know where he is and calls his name over and over.

MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: A lot would depend on the distance between the two ages. I mean the older siblings are at a more competitive age. Whether he had watched.....been there for either birth I don't think ultimately would have made as much difference in their relationship as the age range.

I THINK THERE ARE LOTS OF FACTORS AND WE CAN'T POINT TO ONE THING. DO YOU THINK THE EXPERIENCE HAS AFFECTED ATTACHMENT? THIS REFERS TO THE BOND BETWEEN SIBLINGS?

PATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: Like a heart bond?

MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: Some of the close attachments don't develop until adulthood.

WHAT ABOUT THE SIBLING RELATIONSHIPS?

MATERNAL GRANDFATHER: Do you love your brothers?
(Directed to the oldest sibling)

OLDEST SIBLING: Yes.

HAS IT HAD ANY EFFECT ON FAMILY ON FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS?

MOTHER: I mentioned earlier the acceptance that the family had, they accepted what we did.

FATHER: I don't remember getting much feedback from my brother and sisters.

MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: I think I was a little startled when the whole idea came up but I was, I can be too private, he says. I was trying to put myself in her place and I could not fathom having anyone else other than my husband in the room but I had no objection to it and I can see that it was a very healthy situation.

A RETIRED OBSTETRICAL NURSE I KNOW IS TEACHING GRANDPARENT CLASSES. THESE CAN HELP GRANDPARENTS UNDERSTAND ALL THE CHANGES THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE, THESE HAVE BEEN REALLY DRAMATIC IN THE LAST THIRTY YEARS. SHE CAN REALLY IDENTIFY WITH GRANDPARENTS AND ALSO HAS BEEN THERE SEEING THE CHANGES THAT ARE TAKING PLACE TOO. DO YOU THINK IT HAS MADE ANY DIFFERENCE IN YOUR LIFE? (Indicating paternal grandfather, who has been very quiet)

PATERNAL GRANDFATHER: I doubt it. I'm more interested in five years down the road how much will he remember of the whole experience and will, you know..... Can you remember it very vividly now, yet?

OLDEST SIBLING: Yeah, I remember it.

PATERNAL GRANDFATHER: You can?

MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: It's only been two years. What about four or five years?

PATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: He will be a real nuisance at times and get into his older brothers things.

OLDEST SIBLING: He climbs up on the table and throws all my stuff now.

WHAT NURSING INTERVENTIONS OR SUPPORT MEASURES CAN HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS DO TO IMPROVE THE CARE WE PROVIDE, THAT CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: He was involved in a class or something down there ahead of time wasn't he?

MOTHER: Yes, we all went down.

MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: I don't suppose there's any way that the child could actually get acquainted with the nurse that's going to be on duty because nobody knows exactly when it's going to be, but I would think it might be helpful if he could at least get acquainted with one and talk about it one on one. And hope maybe

that person would be the one on duty at the time. As it becomes more common which I would imagine it will.... Maybe that could be looked into, the class to teach them.

SIBLING PREPARATION CLASSES HAVE BEEN HELD. I'M NOT AWARE OF ANY FOR SIBLINGS ATTENDING BIRTH NEAR US.

MATERNAL GRANDFATHER: I would think that he would be about as young as it would make a lot of sense as far as remembering and handling it. And probably growing up on a farm it was a little easier for him than a lot of kids.

FATHER: I still wonder what it would have been like if it had been a long labor. The child probably would have gotten bored or fallen asleep.

I THINK TIMING IS EVERYTHING AND THERE ARE TIMES WHEN IT WOULDN'T BE VERY PRACTICAL. WHAT ABOUT YOU GRANDPARENTS, WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU?

PATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: It was wonderful to have the call and being able to go right down and be right there and be a part of it all, so, to have it open for us.....for me that was wonderful. I wish I could think of something really good. It really worked out well. I don't know if the next time would work out as well.

MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: Well, and if it was a cesarean it would be out of the picture.

MOTHER: That's what I was thinking.

PATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: My daughter had both cesarean.

OLDEST SIBLING: That's what I was thinking, what if I got down there and you had to have cesarean.

MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: That was the case with one of my other daughters, in labor all day and then had to have cesarean.

I'VE NOT READ ANYTHING THAT HAS INCLUDED THE CHILD IN THAT. NOT TOO MANY YEARS AGO THE FATHER WASN'T INCLUDED. NOW THEY CERTAINLY DO INCLUDE HIM.

MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: In the operating room?

MOTHER: I think it would all depend upon the maturity of the child.

WHAT CAN NURSES DO TO HELP PROMOTE INTERACTION AND INVOLVEMENT OF THE SIBLINGS?

MOTHER: I think first of all just their attitude, the attitude they project. Involving the dads and child and they taking the time to explain things to the child.

MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: Did you talk to your doctor about it ahead of time? His attitude makes a difference.

MOTHER: His attitude was - as long as there's room for me I don't care who else is there or how many.

PATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: Are the nurses in general in favor of this? This would make a difference.

IT VARIES. I CALLED SEVERAL HOSPITALS TO SEE WHAT THEIR POLICY WOULD BE AND MOST HAVE AN OPEN POLICY, MUCH LIKE "WHOEVER THE MOTHER INVITES TO THE BIRTH MAY COME". HOWEVER NURSES LIKE THE GENERAL PUBLIC HAVE OPINIONS PRO AND CON. NOT A LOT OF EXPERIENCES ARE WRITTEN ABOUT IN THE LITERATURE. WHAT I HAVE FOUND HAVE BEEN ON THE COASTS. I DON'T FIND ANYTHING ABOUT THE MIDWEST.

PATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: Would be conservative.

MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: The birthing rooms in the hospital are so nice and large. Some places you might have people in the way.

MATERNAL GRANDFATHER: Do majority of doctors feel ok

about it?

I HAVEN'T ASKED THEM, I'M SURE YOU COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT THEIR APPROVAL. I FOUND ONE LETTER TO THE EDITOR IN NEW ENGLAND JOURNAL OF MEDICINE DISAPPROVING AND THEN SEVERAL RESPONDED LATER IN A POSITIVE WAY.

MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: In regard to grandmothers being there - I've seen this daughter in too much pain emotionally anyway. I don't know if I'd want to be there to go through any more pain with her. My memories are not always good but I still have some vivid memories.

PATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: They say you forget....

MOTHER: What did you think (directed to oldest sibling)?

OLDEST SIBLING: About what?

MOTHER: Seeing your mom in pain?

OLDEST SIBLING: Well, I wasn't really paying that much attention to that, because I was seeing him come out....so I really wasn't paying as much attention but.....

MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: Were you in the room through all the labor?

OLDEST SIBLING: Yes. I don't really remember that I felt scared or what because I just remember thinking of the baby.

MOTHER: Well, and it wasn't that long either.

PATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: He was trying to make the video work..

PAIN WITH A PURPOSE SEEMS EASIER TO DEAL WITH THAN OTHER KINDS OF PAIN. ANY OTHER THINGS YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE?

PATERNAL GRANDFATHER: Has there been any study on the siblings after they grow up to be adults how their relationships are as compared with other kids?

NONE THAT I HAVE FOUND.

MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: I would think the emotional make up of the child makes a great difference. If someone is fearful of new experiences or someone who would be terribly concerned about their mother and so forth.....

MOTHER: That's not him (indicating oldest sibling).

OLDEST SIBLING: No! No!

MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: But there are children that would be torn to pieces. I remember the first time I saw my mother cry. I was just devastated. Parents would take that into consideration.

SOME AUTHORS DO HAVE GUIDELINES TO FOLLOW.

PATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: I wonder if...I was just throwing this out....it means as much or more to the parents, to include the sibling as it does to the sibling - like he says - he wasn't aware of the pain - they're kind of off in their... Cause they haven't had the experiences. But for the parents to share this with the siblings maybe it's a stronger bond for them and to encourage them in their family bonding as much as it is for the sibling.

MATERNAL GRANDMOTHER: I like what you say, if the child has the opportunity to be as involved as they want. Same as with death. They shouldn't be forced to go to a funeral but if they want to be there they need to be, depending on the age. I would think that a boy his age or older involved in a birth, I would hope it would have an effect on them as fathers. How compassionate they were.

MATERNAL GRANDFATHER: Well, in a girl, I would think,

the length of the labor and how long the labor process....this could be very satisfying or very scary.

MOTHER: I think for us, anytime you have a shared experience and can all say, "remember when", it makes a bond that's entirely different than just showing pictures, you know, if you don't have the shared experience and memories.

I HAVE REALLY APPRECIATED THIS TIME. YOU AS A LARGER FAMILY ARE VERY UNIQUE. YOU ARE SPECIAL PEOPLE WHO HAVE CERTAINLY ENRICHED MY LIFE. I HOPE TO SHARE THIS WITH OTHERS AND ENRICH THE LIVES OF OTHERS.